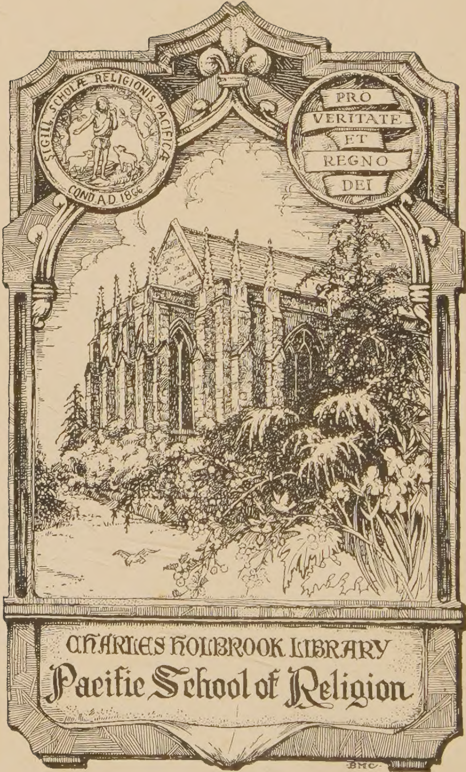
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FIERY GRAINS

Thoughts and Sayings for Some
Occasions put together by

H.ugh R. L. SHEPPARD
AND
H. P. MARSHALL

O wanderer into many brains,
O spark the emperor's purple hides,
You sow the dusk with fiery grains
When the gold horseman rides.

◆

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THE ORIGIN OF THIS BOOK

Dear Dick Sheppard,—I suppose you get hundreds of rather miserable letters, and so I can't really expect you to answer this particular specimen of bewilderment. But I'm writing on the strength of a recent book of yours—not because the book meant very much to me, but because at least you seemed sympathetic to modern intellectual unrest.

Frankly, institutional religion does not interest me at all: that is my fault, in all probability, though I cannot think that you will wholly blame me for it. But in your book you said that institutional religion, properly conducted, could make the average man at least respect it, and later, when he had acquired more moral courage, give it his whole-hearted allegiance and support. I'm not particularly anxious to support institutional religion, but I do want that moral courage, and I feel that perhaps you may help me to find it. Moral courage is a comforting phrase, but its foundations are shadowy until we know where we may seek them.

First let me say who I am. There is a vast generation of average young people, of whom I am one, whose most impressionable years were engulfed, in one way or another, by the war. Some actually fought, and some lost the reality of their school-days in preparation for fighting. Whether we fought, or only prepared to fight, our ideals, our beliefs, our standards were shaken and twisted and sometimes destroyed by the cataclysm, and we were left, when peace came, with a gap between our childhood and our maturity. There was for us no steady growth into a reasoned understanding of life : we could not pass from young ideals to a practical world where those ideals might merge naturally into responsibility based on faith. Our world was tortured, uncertain of itself, groping in a darkness through which we were unfitted to make our way. Questions had arisen which could not be satisfied by the old answers, and we needed, so desperately, some guidance on our journey.

Perhaps no one knew quite how desperate was our need ; we are inarticulate, and somehow we feel awkward when we talk about ideals. Some of us did go rather sheepishly to our local vicar, but he was no good. He seemed to be giving us the sort of stock answers he thought the Bishops would approve, though here and there we found clergymen who looked rather shamefaced as they mouthed useless platitudes, as if they longed to say something more that was in their hearts.

At any rate, no guidance came—no organized guidance, that is to say. Individual men, no doubt, gave some of us a hand, but the opportunity, the marvellous opportunity, for a religion which would really come down to humanity was never taken. Churches continued to choke us off with set forms of religion—your own Church of St. Martin's, may I say, was a vital exception—but set forms of religion cannot suffice minds not trained to receive them. And our minds were not trained—the war had seen to that—and the fact remains that we were choked off, thousands upon thousands of us.

Again I will admit that we may be to blame: we did not persevere, we had no faith, we could not force ourselves into the old moulds. Perhaps we did not care enough, though I think we did. Indeed, I think we cared so much that we did not turn to golf on Sundays merely with a shrug of the shoulders. We played golf, certainly, but we also became cynical and disillusioned, and a cynic is always a man who is bitter because he has been hurt. The hurt remains, and the trouble is that so many of us know more insistently day by day that cynicism is not enough. We know in our hearts that there *is* something, some spirit of life which gives reality to what otherwise would be a shadow-show where ideals could only be troublesome drags upon material enjoyment. I happened recently to read Masefield's ' Invocation '—you know it, I suppose—

> " O wanderer into many brains,
> O spark the emperor's purple hides,
> You sow the dusk with fiery grains
> When the gold horseman rides.
> O beauty on the darkness hurled,
> Be it through me you shame the world."

There you have it—we feel, however dimly, that there is a wanderer who makes beauty more keen for us, who gives reality to our love of hills and sea and home, who is the meaning of sportsmanship and loyalty and courage and fair-play, who makes us certain that our own small lives, with all their ordinary cares, have a purpose which we cannot understand.

I know nothing about you except your books and your work at St. Martin's, but you are a parson (and therefore suspect !) and it is your job to answer questions. It is, I realize, a difficult question that we put to you, but what are the "fiery grains" which only can give substance to our loyalties ? And I want you to understand that it is not only as a parson that we are asking you, but as a man. You see, it is not easy to believe that the Church can solve our problems, when the Church so clearly cannot solve its own.

This, I feel, is an opportunity for telling you how miserable it is to watch the men who should be leading us in unity by the light of an essential truth falling out among themselves, squabbling about the petty technicalities and the outward forms of a religion which in its simplest form could mean so much to us. If religion is only a matter of Prayer Book services, sacraments and rubrics, I have wasted your time and mine in writing to you : the theological plumbers can mend their own sinks well enough, and I for one shall not criticize or care about their workmanship.

But if you can show me where your religion fits into my ordinary life, where your beliefs will help me to face Monday morning, and, indeed, the average problems of everyday life with a confidence that they are worth facing with some idealism, you will satisfy not only my unimportant needs, but the needs of thousands of bewildered men and women. Therefore, once again I ask you, what are the fiery grains?

Yours sincerely,
H. P. MARSHALL.

MY DEAR MARSHALL,—I know that we parsons are rather suspect, and I am the more grateful to you for writing frankly to me.

I do not wonder that institutional religion does not interest you and your like. There is, I think, a great deal more to be said for it than you suggest, but I am myself so disappointed with what I cannot help regarding as its failure in recent years that I am almost at one with you in the complaints that you make. However, let us, if you will permit, put that problem on one side for the moment.

I don't think I realised until I got your letter what a miserable time you youngsters had during the war years. You were old enough to fret but not old enough to fight, and it must have been a pretty difficult and poisonous time for you. Now you are bewildered, and the help that you need does not seem to be offered to you by anyone. I wonder if you realise that many of us older folk are as bewildered as you are? I think if we were honest we too would confess that we have to some extent lost our way, though what seems old-fashioned and out of date to you may help some of my generation more than you know.

But here is the point. Is it possible for us to get together and assist each other to find the fiery grains that you need? I confess that I know no short-cut into the Utopia that we are both after. I have nothing very interesting to suggest to you as an answer to the S.O.S. you send me, but you have helped me enormously in that you have made me see, more than I did already, that it is high time that the dissatisfied folk in your generation and in mine got together, determined at all costs to find reality.

I have a proposal to make which may not

meet with your approval. It may seem to you much too trivial and uninteresting, and I shan't blame you if it does. I think at your age it might have sounded pretty tame to me ; but here it is for what it is worth. Probably you, and certainly I, have to get ourselves thoroughly in hand before we can be of much service in these bewildering days. It is no good, is it, crying for ideals and Utopias, which some call Kingdoms of God, unless we are pretty well founded ourselves on some sort of rock, unless, that is to say, we have a very real appreciation of the essential meaning of Truth, Goodness and Beauty and the privilege of living ?

I know nothing about you, but I gather from your reference to John Masefield that you find that reading helps you—and it is probable that you read a good deal. If that happens to be so, how about our getting together some of the things in old and modern literature that seem to us what we need in those moments when we are baffled, disappointed, or red-hot on the scent of what are known as eternal values ? I expect so far this sounds rather gibberish to you, but to put my suggestion in a sentence, I would propose, as a preparation for possibly something much bigger, that we set out to collect all sorts of strong and lovely things, by reading which we ourselves would be ready for the next step towards attaining a nobler balance of living and a greater conception of what life means and entails for us and our friends. It is even possible that if we found our collection helpful, we should put it out in book form. This sounds ambitious, but it would give our work an object, and a constructive object at that.

Of course, if we did that I don't mean that we should in any way set ourselves up as judges of literature ; our standard would be one of application to life as we know it, rather than one of literary values. Perhaps critical readers would think us banal and even eccentric, but I should like to include extracts which would express every kind of mood—extracts which might appear inconsequent, but which might give relief merely by expressing states of mind which we all sometimes feel. Humour would thus naturally come in. And I think you will agree that it would be just as well, if we decide to publish our collection, definitely to leave untouched such sources as the Bible and other great devotional books, not only because happily they are familiar, but because choice would be so invidious.

Are you on for this? We shan't achieve much, I grant you, but we shall make a beginning, and later who knows whether something much more interesting and effective may not seem to us worth striving after? For Heaven's sake don't think I am attempting to do you good, but we will discover as many of those fiery grains as we can, and we will not merely read them. We will see if by attaining to them we cannot get ourselves above these rather depressing, despondent moods, which made you, and which, let me confess, make me sometimes, wonder whether things are at all worth while. I am quite aware that you may not think that this will help, and I shall perfectly understand a word from you to that effect. I should not myself think there was anything in the suggestion if I did not believe that it might be a beginning of something much more serviceable to ourselves and possibly to others.

I do hope this does not seem bathos as a response to your letter. If you think that there is anything in my suggestion, let's meet and talk it over.

Yours sincerely,
H. R. L. Sheppard.

(It was from these beginnings, and from the subsequent meetings, that this book came into being.)

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SPECIAL OCCASIONS

[There are moods into which we all fall upon particular occasions, and below are given some of those moods and occasions which, added together, form the sum of every man's life. Opposite each are the numbers of the extracts from this book which, it is suggested, might most appropriately be read to meet the need of the moment. Obviously the list must be limited, but readers will have no difficulty in extending and applying it in principle to cover their own varying requirements.]

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MORNING LIGHT

THERE is an idea abroad among moral people that they should make their neighbours good. One person I have to make good: myself. But my duty to my neighbour is much more nearly expressed by saying that I have to make him happy if I may.

1

Credo

I BELIEVE in the ultimate decency of things; ay, and if I woke in hell, should still believe it.

2

A Greeting

GOOD morning, Life—and all
Things glad and beautiful.
My pockets nothing hold,
But he that owns the gold,
The Sun, is my great friend—
His spending has no end.

Hail to the morning sky,
Which bright clouds measure high;
Hail to you birds whose throats
Would number leaves by notes;
Hail to you shady bowers,
And you green fields of flowers.

Hail to you women fair,
That make a show so rare
In cloth as white as milk—
Be't calico or silk:
Good morning, Life—and all
Things glad and beautiful.

3

Monday morning

THANK God every morning when you get up that you have something to do which must be done, whether you like it or not. Being forced to work, and forced to do your best, will breed in you temperance, self-control, diligence, strength of will, content, and a hundred other virtues which the idle never know.

4

Green ivory

WHAT a bore it is, waking up in the morning always the same person. I wish I were unflinching and emphatic, and had big, bushy eyebrows and a Message for the Age. I wish I were a deep Thinker, or a great Ventriloquist.

I should like to be refined-looking and melancholy, the victim of a hopeless passion ; to love in the old, stilted way, with impossible Adoration and Despair under the pale-faced Moon.

I wish I could get up ; I wish I were the world's greatest Violinist. I wish I had lots of silver, and first Editions, and green ivory.

5

My Great Task

If I have faltered more or less
In my great task of happiness ;
If I have moved among my race
And shown no glorious morning face ;
If beams from happy human eyes
Have moved me not ; if morning skies,
Books, and my food, and summer rain
Knocked at my sullen heart in vain :—
Lord, Thy most pointed pleasure take,
And stab my spirit broad awake ;
Or, Lord, if too obdurate I,
Choose Thou before that spirit die,
A piercing pain, a killing sin,
And to my dead heart run them in !

6

After the night before

In the house, overlooking the Seine, where Voltaire died—it is now a restaurant as to the ground floor, like Burke's house in Gerrard

Street—in this house I met a melancholy man. . . . I asked this man what irked him. He said (with a groan) that he had been at a studio party in the Quarter the night before and had lost his guitar. He said he could not go home without his guitar. He said he had also fallen downstairs in the early morning. He said love was a lie, and that the world was full of ugly faces which gave him a pain in the neck, and that he had lost his guitar. He had also (he added) fallen downstairs in the early morning. With that he became as mute as a haddock and relapsed into brooding; and I respected his grief and left him. . . .

7

A happy man

To awaken each morning with a smile brightening my face; to greet the day with reverence for the opportunities it contains; to approach my work with a clean mind; to hold ever before me, even in the doing of little things, the Ultimate Purpose toward which I am working; to meet men and women with laughter on my lips and love in my heart ; to be gentle, kind, and courteous through all the hours : to approach the night with weariness that ever woos sleep and the joy that comes from work well done—this is how I desire to waste wisely my days.

8

You never know

WHEN I seek out the sources of my thoughts, I find they had their beginning in fragile Chance ; they were born of little moments that shine for me curiously in the past. Slight the impulse that made me take this turning at the crossroads, trivial and fortuitous the meeting, and light as gossamer the thread that first knit me to my friend. These are full of wonder; more mysterious are the moments that must have brushed me with their wings and passed me by : when Fate beckoned and I did not see it, when Life trembled for a second on the threshold ; but the word was not spoken, the hand was not held out, and the Might-have-been shivered and vanished, dim as a dream, into the realms of non-existence.

So I never lose a sense of the whimsical and perilous charm of daily life, with its meetings and words and accidents. Why, to-day, perhaps, or next week, I may hear a voice, and, packing up my Gladstone bag, follow it to the ends of the world.

9

Beauty

Oh, God! The sky is filled with the sun, and the sun is like music. The sky is full of music. Music comes streaming down these great beams. The wind touches the harp-like trees, shakes little jets of music—little shakes, little trills from the flowers. The shape of every flower is like a sound. My hands open like five petals. Praise Him! Praise Him! No, I am overcome; I am dazed; it is too much to bear.

10

The Sticky Leaves

The centripetal force on our planet is still fearfully strong, Alyosha. I have a longing for life, and I go on living in spite of logic. Though I may not believe in the order of the universe, yet I love the sticky little leaves as they open in spring. I love the blue sky, I love some people, whom one loves you know sometimes without knowing why. I love some great deeds done by men, though I've long ceased perhaps to have faith in them, yet from old habit one's heart prizes them. Here they have brought the soup for you, eat it, it will do you good. It's first-rate soup, they know how to make it here. I want to travel in Europe, Alyosha, I shall set off from here. And yet I know that I am only going to a grave-yard, but it's a most precious grave-yard, that's what it is! Precious are the dead that lie there, every stone over them speaks of such burning life in the past, of such passionate faith in their work, their truth, their struggle and their science, that I know I shall fall on the ground and kiss those stones and weep over them; though I'm convinced in my heart that it's long been nothing but a grave-yard. And I shall not weep from despair, but simply because I shall be happy in my tears, I shall steep my soul in my emotion. I love the sticky leaves in spring, the blue sky—that's all it is. It's not a matter of intellect or logic, it's loving with one's inside, with one's stomach. One loves the first strength of one's youth.

11

Sheet-anchors

WHAT seems to grow fairer to me as life goes by is the love and grace and tenderness of it; not its wit and cleverness and grandeur of knowledge, grand as knowledge is, but just the laughter of little children and the friendship of friends and the cosy talk by the fireside and the sight of flowers and the sound of music.

12

The kind world

IT had been raining all day, and the people in the crowded tramcar were not in a very happy mood. But they had just passed the church which proclaims to all who can read: "Remember that the greatest in history was one of the poorest, and that He was wonderfully kind," and perhaps recollection of it was in their minds when the tram stopped.

Among those waiting was a man painfully

supporting himself on crutches. His leg was in a sling, and he was evidently returning from the hospital. It was raining hard. All the other people waiting stood back for him to pass in. But how was he to do that with his leg held out horizontally, and the car full? The driver's platform was packed with parcels, so that way was blocked.

There were friendly calls of "Take your time!" Then someone suggested "Why not get out?" and at once all filed out into the rain, and the cripple passed down the empty car till he had a comfortable seat at the inner end, and the car filled up again.

13

Memories remain

Sweet cyder is a great thing,
  A great thing to me,
Spinning down to Weymouth town
  By Ridgway thirstily,
And maid and mistress summoning
  Who tend the hostelry:
O cyder is a great thing,
  A great thing to me!

The dance it is a great thing,
  A great thing to me,
With candles lit and partners fit
  For night-long revelry ;
And going home when day-dawning
  Peeps pale upon the lea :
O dancing is a great thing,
  A great thing to me !

Love is, yea, a great thing,
  A great thing to me,
When, having drawn across the lawn
  In darkness silently,
A figure flits like one a-wing
  Out from the nearest tree :
O love is, yea, a great thing,
  A great thing to me !

Will these be always great things,
  Great things to me ?
Let it befall that One will call,
  " Soul, I have need of thee " :
What then ? Joy-jaunts, impassioned flings,
  Love, and its ecstasy,
Will always have been great things,
  Great things to me !

14

He that hath ears

PLEASURE it is
To hear, I wis,
The birdes sing.
The deer in the dale,
The sheep in the vale,
The corn springing ;
God's purveyance
For sustenance
It is for man.
Then we always
To Him give praise,
And thank Him than,
And thank Him than.

15

Remembrance

FOUR ducks on a pond,
A grass bank beyond.
A blue sky of spring,
White clouds on the wing.
What a little thing
To remember for years,
To remember with tears.

16

The wine of life

"When I've left off caring the way I do
For the things that's old an' the things that's new—

" For the things that's happening every minute
And all the sights as the world's got in it :

" When a ship's no more than a ship to me,
An' there's nowheres left as I want to see :

" When the fun's all flat, an' the jokes all stale,
'An there ain't no taste in the cakes an' the ale,

" You can stitch me up as soon as you like
In a corner o' wore out sail," said Mike,

" With 'olystones at my 'eels and 'ead,
An' dollop me overboard. . . . I'll be dead ! "

17

The happiest hour

Oh give me the hour that I love best,
When the heart is quite warm and the words are free.
When I sit at my ease and converse with a friend,
Who sits at his ease and converses with me.

THE HAPPIER WAY

18

Wot’cher !

“What I say is, life ain’t all you want, but it’s all you ’ave ; so ’ave it ; stick a geranium in yer ’at, an’ be ’appy.”

19

Pass it round

Old and young, we are all on our last cruise. If there is a fill of tobacco among the crew, for God’s sake pass it round, and let us have a pipe before we go !

20

The cup of life

Away with funeral music, set
The pipe to powerful lips—
The cup of life’s for him who drinks
And not for him who sips.

21

The uninvited guest

Hope is a charming, lively, blue-eyed wench, and I am always glad of her company, but could dispense with the visitor she brings with her, her younger sister, Fear, a white-livered, lilly-cheeked, bashful, palpitating, awkward hussey, that hangs like a green girl at her sister's apron-strings, and will go with her whithersoever *she* goes.

22

Travelling hopefully

A STRANGE picture we make on our way to our chimeras, ceaselessly marching, grudging ourselves the time for rest : indefatigable, adventurous pioneers.

It is true that we shall never reach the goal ; it is even more than probable that there is no such place ; and if we lived for centuries and were endowed with the powers of a god we should find ourselves not much nearer what we wanted at the end. O toiling hands of mortals ! O unwearied feet, travelling ye know not whither ! Soon, soon, it seems to you, you must come forth on some conspicuous hilltop, and but a little way farther, against the setting sun, descry the spires of El Dorado. Little do ye know your own blessedness, for to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive, and the true success is to labour.

23

Facing troubles

I HAVE told you of the man who always put on his spectacles when about to eat cherries, in order that the fruit might look larger and more tempting. In like manner I always make the most of my enjoyments, and, though I do not cast my eyes away from troubles, I pack them into as small a compass as I can for myself, and never let them annoy others.

24

Life is sweet

"MY opinion of death, brother, is much the same as that in the old song of Pharaoh, which I have heard my grandam sing :

> ' Canna marel 'o manus chivios andé puv,
> Ta rovel pa leste o chavo ta romi.'

When a man dies, he is cast into the earth, and his wife and child sorrow over him. If he has neither wife nor child, then his father and mother, I suppose ; and if he is quite alone in the world, why, then, he is cast into the earth, and there is an end of the matter."

"And do you think that is the end of the man?"

"There's an end of him, brother, more's the pity."

"Why do you say so?"

"Life is sweet, brother."

"Do you think so?"

"Think so! There's night and day, brother, both sweet things; sun, moon, and stars, brother, all sweet things; there's likewise a wind on the heath. Life is very sweet, brother; who would wish to die?"

"I would wish to die——"

"You talk like a gorgio—which is the same as talking like a fool—were you a Rommany Chal you would talk wiser. Wish to die, indeed! A Rommany Chal would wish to live for ever!"

"In sickness, Jasper?"

"There's the sun and stars, brother."

"In blindness, Jasper?"

"There's the wind on the heath, brother; if I could only feel that, I would gladly live for ever. Dosta, we'll now go to the tents and put on the gloves; and I'll try to make you feel what a sweet thing it is to be alive, brother!"

25

The happy warrior

LAUGH and be merry, remember, better the
world with a song,
Better the world with a blow in the teeth of
a wrong.
Laugh, for the time is brief; a thread the length
of a span.
Laugh and be proud to belong to the old proud
pageant of man.

26

From the window

I AM wonderfully struck with the way in which you manage to get out of ordinary things, clouds, fresh air, all that is in them, or a good part of it (for who can extract a thousandth fraction?). When you are in perfect health, able to get about by train and see pictures and hear music, you may not pay much attention to a bit of sky over your garden, but now you will watch it for hours, and discover every few minutes new glories. There is a plain field at the back of our house, with a ring of trees round it, which has been a retreat a hundred times for me. It is continually new because I study it—far newer than Switzerland could possibly be.

27

The grudging spirit

"REJOICE with them that do rejoice." Little thing as this seems, it still is exceeding great, and requireth for it the spirit of true wisdom. And we might find many that perform the more irksome part, and yet want vigour for this. For many weep with them that weep, but still do not rejoice with them that rejoice. . . . So great is the tyranny of a grudging spirit.

28

Boning Jones

HERE lies the body of William Jones,
Who all his life collected bones,
Till Death, that grim and boney spectre,
That universal bone collector,
Boned old Jones, so neat and tidy,
And here he lies, all *bona fide*.

29

Unquestioning

HE who bends to himself a joy
Does the winged life destroy :
But he who kisses the joy as it flies
Lives in eternity's sunrise.

30

Life is sweet, brother

ONE passage in your letter a little displeased me. The rest was nothing but kindness, which Robert's letters are always brimful of.

You say that "this world to you seems drained of all its sweets!" At first I had hoped you only meant to intimate the high price of sugar, but I am afraid you meant more.

O, Robert, I don't know what you call sweet. Honey and the honeycomb, roses and violets, are yet in the Earth. The Sun and Moon yet reign in Heaven, and the lesser lights keep up their pretty twinklings. Meats and drinks, sweet sights and sweet smells, a country walk, spring and autumn, follies and repentance, quarrels and reconcilements, have all a sweetness by turns.

Good humour and good nature, friends at home that love you, and friends abroad that miss you—you possess all these things. You may extract honey from everything.

31

The best times

"SHIPS . . . they go," said Murphy, "like a spent pay-roll. . . .
They're sunk in the deep water or they're wrecked on the shoal;
Burnt or scrapped in the long run, the big ships an' small,—
An' the ships a man remembers, they're the best ships of all.

"Friends . . . they go," said Murphy, "the false and the true,
They all go at the finish, the same as the ships do;
They go like a spree that's ended or a last year's song,
But the friends a man remembers, they're his own his life long.

"Times . . . they pass," said Murphy, "the
fair and foul weather,
The good times and the bad times, they all
pass together;
Like a steersman's trick that's ended, or a
blown-out squall. . . .
An' the times a man remembers . . . they're
the best times of all!"

32

A merry Christmas

"Yo ho, my boys!" said Fezziwig. "No more work to-night. Christmas Eve, Dick. Christmas, Ebenezer! Let's have the shutters up," cried old Fezziwig, with a sharp clap of his hands, "before a man can say Jack Robinson!"

You wouldn't believe how those two fellows went at it! They charged into the street with the shutters—one, two, three—had 'em up in their places—four, five, six—barred 'em and pinned 'em—seven, eight, nine—and came back before you could have got to twelve, panting like race-horses.

"Hilli-ho!" cried old Fezziwig, skipping down from the high desk, with wonderful agility. " Clear away, my lads, and let's have lots of room here ! Hilli-ho, Dick ! Chirrup, Ebenezer ! "

Clear away ! There was nothing they wouldn't have cleared away, or couldn't have cleared away, with old Fezziwig looking on. It was done in a minute. Every movable was packed off, as if it were dismissed from public life for evermore ; the floor was swept and watered, the lamps were trimmed, fuel was heaped upon the fire ; and the warehouse was as snug, and warm, and dry, and bright a ball-room, as you would desire to see upon a winter's night.

In came a fiddler with a music-book, went up to the lofty desk, and made an orchestra of it, and tuned like fifty stomach-aches. In came Mrs. Fezziwig, one vast substantial smile. In came the three Miss Fezziwigs, beaming and loveable. In came the six young fellows whose hearts they broke. In came all the young men and women employed in the business. In came the housemaid with her cousin, the baker. In came the cook, with her brother's particular friend, the milkman. In came the boy from over the way, who was suspected of not having board enough from his master; trying to hide himself behind the girl from next door but one, who was proved to have had her ears pulled by her mistress. In they all came, one after another; some shyly, some boldly, some gracefully, some awkwardly, some pushing, some pulling; in they all came, anyhow and everyhow. Away they all went, twenty couple at once; hands half round and back again the other way; down the middle and up again; round and round in various stages of affectionate grouping; old top couple always turning up in the wrong place; new top couple starting off again, as soon as they got there; all top couples at last, and not a bottom one to help them! When this result was brought about, old Fezziwig, clapping his hands to stop the dance, cried out, "Well done!" and the fiddler plunged his hot face in a pot of porter, especially provided for the purpose. . . . But the great effect of the evening came after the Roast and Boiled, when the fiddler (an artful dog, mind! The sort of man who knew his business better than you or I could have told it him!) struck up "Sir

Roger de Coverley." Then old Fezziwig stood out to dance with Mrs. Fezziwig. . . . When the clock struck eleven, this domestic ball broke up. Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig took their stations, one on either side of the door, and shaking hands with every person individually as he or she went out, wished him or her a Merry Christmas.

33

The citadel of peace

LIFE's great irony is that achievement defeats itself in the moment of its victory. *Tantæ molis erat Romanam condere gentem.* The poet has scarcely finished before the historian takes up the tale of the Decline and Fall. Our Paradise may be lost and regained, but never held and enjoyed. We develop our brains and pay by the decay of our bodies ; we refine our tastes and pay by the decay of our morals ; we become humane and find that we have lost our endurance ; we enjoy the blessings of peace and find that our bones are full of water. There is stupendous energy of building up, stupendous energy of tearing down, but no moment of repose for the atom or the planet or the human spirit. The city of the soul whirls and vibrates like a machine-shop fitted with dynamos. Yet, somewhere in the heart of it all, the individual can make his own peace on his own terms and defy the whole universe to disturb it. It still matters nothing to me that the earth and the solar system are whirling through space at the rate of sixty miles a second from no one knows where to no one knows whither, if I may sit in my garden and listen to the bees on a summer afternoon.

34

Philosophy

"YOU are quite a philosopher, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick.

"It runs in the family, I b'lieve, sir," replied Mr. Weller. "My father's wery much in that line, now. If my mother-in-law blows him up, he whistles. She flies in a passion, and breaks his pipe; he steps out and gets another. Then she screams very loud, and falls into 'sterics: and he smokes very comfortably 'til she comes to again. That's philosophy, sir, ain't it?"

35

Be of good cheer

NOWHERE else is the genius of the Christian religion more poignantly revealed than in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, which begins in the minor key and gradually rises to the major, until it culminates in a great merry-making to the surprise of the Elder Son, who thinks the majesty of the moral law will be compromised by the music and the dancing, and has to be reminded that these joyous sounds are the keynotes of the Spiritual World.

36

On eating grapes

ON another time when the blessed Father was at the same place, a certain friar, spiritual and old in the Order, was there infirm and very feeble. And when he saw him blessed Francis was moved with pity for him. But because then the friars, both well and ill, with great joy were using poverty for their abundance, and not using in their sickness medicines nor even asking for them, but on the other hand taking by choice those things which were contrary to the body, blessed Francis said within himself, " If that brother would eat some ripe grapes early in the morning I believe it would do him good." And as he thought so he did in its turn.

For he rose on a certain day, very early, and called to him that friar privately, and led him into a certain vineyard which was near the dwelling. And he chose a vine whereon the grapes were good to eat, and sitting near the vine with that friar, began to eat of the grapes, lest the brother himself should be ashamed to eat alone. And while they were eating, the friar was cured, and together they praised the Lord. Whence that friar for the whole time of his life, remembered this the mercy and piety which the most holy Father showed and did unto him, and often with great devotion and shedding of tears was wont to relate this among the brethren.

37

Experientia Docet

IT is in the nature of things that those who are incapable of happiness should have no idea of it. Happiness is not for wild animals, who can only oscillate between apathy and passion. To be happy, even to conceive happiness, you must be reasonable or (if Nietzsche prefers the word) you must be tamed. You must have taken the measure of your powers, tasted the fruits of your passions and learned your place in the world and what things in it can really serve you. To be happy you must be wise. This happiness is sometimes found instinctively, and then the rudest fanatic can hardly fail to see how lovely it is ; but sometimes it comes of having learned something by experience (which empirical people never do) and involves some chastening and renunciation ; but it is not less sweet for having this touch of holiness about it, and the spirit of it is healthy and beneficent.

38

Wisdom and virtue

To sit still and contemplate—to remember the faces of women without desire, to be pleased by the deeds of great men without envy, to be everything and everywhere in sympathy, and yet content to remain where and what you are, is not this to know both wisdom and virtue, and to dwell with happiness ?

39

These are yours

I CONSIDER that he that is the greatest possessor in the world, enjoys its best and most noble parts, and those which are of most excellent perfection, but in common with the inferior persons, and most despicable of his kingdom. Can the greatest prince enclose the Sun, and set one little Star in his cabinet for his own use, or secure to himself the gentle and benign influence of any one constellation? Are not his subjects' fields bedewed with the same showers that water his gardens of pleasure? . . .

The poorest artisan of Rome, walking in Caesar's gardens, had the same pleasures which they ministered to their Lord: and although it may be, he was put to gather fruits to eat from another place, yet his other senses were delighted equally with Caesar's: the birds made him as good music, the flowers gave him as sweet smells; he there sucked as good air, and delighted in the beauty and order of the place, for the same reason and upon the same perception as the prince himself, save only that

Caesar paid for all that pleasure vast sums of money, the blood and treasure of a province, which the poor man had for nothing.

Suppose a man lord of all the whole world (for still we are but in supposition), yet since everything is received, not according to its own greatness and worth, but according to the capacity of the receiver, it signifies very little as to our content, or to the riches of our possession. . . . He to whom the world can be given to any purpose greater than a private estate can minister, must have new capacities created in him : he needs the understanding of an angel to take the accounts of his estate ; he had need have a stomach like fire or the grave, for else he can eat no more than one of his healthful subjects : and unless he hath an eye like the Sun, and a motion like that of a thought, and a bulk as big as one of the orbs of heaven, the pleasures of his eye can be no greater than to behold the beauty of a little prospect from a hill, or to look upon the heap of gold packed up in a little room, or to dote upon a cabinet of jewels—better than which there is no man that sees at all but sees every day. For not to name the beauties and sparkling diamonds of heaven, a man's or a woman's or a hawk's eye is more beauteous and excellent than all the jewels of his crown.

40

That great day

WHEN I look upon the tombs of the great, every emotion of envy dies in me ; when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful, every inordinate desire goes out ; when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tomb-stone, my heart melts with compassion ; when I see the tomb of the parents themselves, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly follow : when I see kings lying by those who deposed them, when I consider rival wits placed side by side, or the holy men that divided the world with their contests and disputes, I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the little competitions, factions, and debates of mankind. When I read the several dates of the tombs, of some that died yesterday, and some six hundred years ago, I consider that great Day when we shall all of us be contemporaries, and make our appearance together.

41

The infinite dominion

ALL real and wholesome enjoyments possible to man have been just as possible to him, since first he was made of the earth, as they are now; and they are possible to him chiefly in peace. To watch the corn grow, and the blossoms set; to draw hard breath over ploughshare or spade; to read, to think, to love, to hope, to pray—these are the things that make men happy. . . . Now and then a wearied king, or a tormented slave, found out where the true kingdoms of the world were, and possessed himself, in a furrow or two of garden ground, of a truly infinite dominion.

42

If only we dared

AH! how true it is what you say about the reformation which would follow if we had the courage to be happy in our own way! The misery of it is that we don't know what our own happiness is, and will obstinately persist in trying to adopt the happiness of other people, or, most likely, something which is not their happiness.

43

Harvest

Sow an action and reap a habit, sow a habit and reap a character, sow a character and reap a destiny.

44

The right sort

The men whom I have seen succeed best in life have always been cheerful and hopeful men, who went about their business with a smile on their faces, and took the changes and chances of this mortal life like men, facing rough and smooth alike as it came.

45

The simple man

The most agreeable of all companions is a simple, frank man, without any high pretensions to an oppressive greatness ; one who loves life and understands the use of it ; obliging, alike at all hours ; above all, of a golden temper, and steadfast as an anchor. For such a one we gladly exchange the greatest genius, the most brilliant wit, the profoundest thinker.

46

The epitaph

DIE when I may, I want it said of me by those who knew me best, that I always plucked a thistle and planted a flower where I thought a flower would grow.

47

Here is a task

TO be honest, to be kind, to earn a little, and to spend a little less, to make upon the whole a family happier for his presence, to renounce when that shall be necessary and not to be embittered, to keep a few friends, but these without capitulation ; above all, on the same condition, to keep friends with himself ; here is a task for all a man has of fortitude and delicacy.

48

Masters of fate

F*ear God*, and take your own part. There's Bible in that, young man : see how Moses feared God, and how he took his own part against everybody who meddled with him.

And see how David feared God, and took his own part against all the bloody enemies which surrounded him—so fear God, young man, and never give in ! The world can bully, and is fond, provided it sees a man in a kind of difficulty, of getting about him, calling him coarse names, and even going so far as to hustle him : but the world, like all bullies, carries a white feather in its tail, and no sooner sees the man taking off his coat, and offering to fight its best, than it scatters here and there, and is always civil to him afterwards. So when folks are disposed to ill-treat you, young man, say, " Lord have mercy upon me ! " and then tip them Long Melford, to which, as the saying goes, there is nothing comparable for shortness all the world over. . . .

49

The universal thump

NO, when I go to sea, I go as a simple sailor, right before the mast, plumb down into the forecastle, aloft there to the royal masthead. True, they rather order me about some, and make me jump from spar to spar, like a grasshopper in a May meadow. And at first, this sort of thing is unpleasant enough. It touches one's sense of honour, particularly if you come of an old-established family in the land, the Van Rensselaers, or Randolphs, or Hardicanutes. And more than all, if just previous to putting your hand into the tar-pot, you have been lording it as a country schoolmaster, making the tallest boys stand in awe of you. The transition is a keen one, I assure you, from a schoolmaster to a sailor, and requires a strong decoction of Seneca and the Stoics to enable you to grin and bear it. But even this wears off in time.

What of it, if some old hunks of a sea-captain orders me to get a broom and sweep down the decks? What does that indignity amount to, weighed, I mean, in the scales of the New Testament? Do you think the archangel Gabriel thinks anything the less of me, because I promptly and respectfully obey that old hunks in that particular instance? Who ain't a slave? Tell me that. Well, then, however the old sea-captains may order me about—however they may thump and punch me about, I have the satisfaction of knowing that it is all right: that everybody else is one way or another served in much the same way—either in a physical or metaphysical point of view, that is ; and so the universal thump is passed round, and all hands should rub each other's shoulder blades, and be content.

50

All things are possible

NOTHING too bad to be incurable ; nothing too good to be hoped for ; nothing too high to be attempted ; nothing so precious that we cannot afford to give it away. Yes, even that ! For there is that within the hero which is so rich that he can afford to give his very life away, and be none the poorer.

51

Resume yourself

THOUGH the World be histrionical, and most men live ironically, yet be thou what thou singly art, and personate only thy self. Swim smoothly in the stream of thy Nature, and live but one Man. To single Hearts doubling is discruciating : such tempers must sweat to dissemble, and prove but hypocritical

Hypocrites. Simulation must be short: Men do not easily continue a counterfeiting Life, or dissemble unto Death. He who counterfeiteth, acts a part, and is as it were out of himself: which, if long, proves so irksome, that Men are glad to pull of their Vizards, and resume themselves again; no practice being able to naturalize such unnaturals, or make a Man rest content not to be himself. And therefore since Sincerity is thy Temper, let veracity be thy Virtue in Words, Manners, and Actions.

52

Thy gost

WEYVE thy lust, and lat thy gost thee lede:
And trouthe shall delivere, it is no drede.

53

A tinker's truth

NO face which we can give to a matter will stead us so well at last as the truth. This alone wears well. For the most part, we are not where we are, but in a false position. Through an infirmity of our natures, we suppose a case and put ourselves into it, and hence are in two cases at the same time, and it is doubly difficult to get out. In sane moments we regard only the facts, the case that is. Say what you have to say, not what you ought. Any truth is better than make-believe. Tom Hyde, the tinker, standing on the gallows, was asked if he had anything to say. " Tell the tailors," said he, " to remember to make a knot in their thread before they take the first stitch." His companion's prayer is forgotten.

54

Blushing?

AND yet might there not be gain also from a universal practice of uttering our thoughts aloud? Imagine a world in which nobody had any secrets from anybody—could have no secrets from anybody. . . . It would be a world in which lies would have no value and deception would be a waste of time—a world in which truth would no longer be at the bottom of the well, but on the tip of every man's tongue. We should have all the rascals in prison and all the dishonest traders in the bankruptcy court. Secret diplomacy would no longer play with the lives of men, for there would be no secrets. Those little perverse concealments that wreck so many lives would vanish. You, sir, who find it so easy to nag at home and so difficult to say the kind thing that you know to be true, would be discovered to your great advantage and to the peace of your household.

Yes, I think the world would go very well if we all had tongues that told our true thoughts in spite of us. But what a lot of us would be found out. My own face crimsons at the thought. So, I think, does yours.

55

A ship of truth

MAN with his burning soul
Has but an hour of breath
To build a ship of truth
In which his soul may sail—
Sail on the sea of death,
For death takes toll
Of beauty, courage, youth,
Of all but truth.

56

Choosing your words

SAY what is true and what is pleasant. Do not say what is pleasant and not true, nor what is true and not pleasant.

57

Magna est veritas

HERE, in this little Bay,
Full of tumultuous life and great repose,
Where, twice a day,
The purposeless, glad ocean comes and goes,
Under high cliffs, and far from the huge town,
I sit me down.
For want of me the world's course will not fail :
When all its work is done, the lie shall rot ;
The truth is great, and shall prevail,
When none cares whether it prevail or not.

58

Truth in action

IT is sometimes imagined that the discovery of truth is a logical reason. Logic is the instrument, but unless it is used by an incorrupt intent, it is useless and even pernicious. If I find a doctrine to be true but unpalatable, and endeavour to reason myself out of it, I fatally injure my capacity for apprehending truth. The next time I encounter a truth it will be easy to evade it or I may even be able to affirm it to be a heresy, and at last I shall be deprived of the capacity—damned literally, I then am—to recognize truth when I see it. " He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart ; that they should not see with their eyes nor understand with their heart, and be converted and I should heal them." The same consequence follows if I do not act the truth revealed to me. I do not say that in every company and at all times I am bound unchallenged to proclaim my convictions, but I do say that if I believe a statement to be false I ought to let people know I believe it to be false when it is discussed.

You will pardon me, perhaps, a self-reference. More than forty years ago the whole course of my life was changed by my refusal to slur over a difference between myself and my teacher on the subject of the inspiration of the Bible. I might easily have told him " You and I mean really the same thing," or used some other current phrase contrived in order to stifle conscience. I might have succeeded in being content with a mush of lies and truth, a compound more poisonous than lies unmixed, but I was unable to resist. I have never regretted the decision then taken. I can see now that if I had yielded I should have been lost for ever.

59

Imprisoned splendour

TRUTH is within ourselves; it takes no rise
From outward things, whate'er you may
believe.
There is an inmost centre in us all
Where truth abides in fullness; and around,
Wall upon wall, the gross flesh hems it in,
This perfect, clear perception—which is truth.
A baffling and perverting carnal mesh
Binds it, and makes all error: and, to know,
Rather consists in opening out a way
Whence the imprisoned splendour may escape,
Than in effecting entry for a light
Supposed to be without.

60

Bad luck, Boswell!

BOSWELL. "I wish much to be in Parliament, Sir."

Johnson. "Why, Sir, unless you come resolved to support any administration, you would be the worse for being in Parliament, because you would be obliged to live more expensively."

Boswell. "Perhaps, Sir, I should be the less happy for being in Parliament. I never would sell my vote, and I should be vexed if things went wrong."

Johnson. "That's cant, Sir. It would not vex you more in the house, than in the gallery: publick affairs vex no man."

Boswell. "Have not you been vexed by all the turbulence of this reign, and by that absurd vote of the House of Commons, 'That the influence of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished'?"

Johnson. "Sir, I have never slept an hour less, nor eat an ounce less meat. I would have knocked the factious dogs on the head, to be sure; but I was not vexed."

Boswell. "I declare, Sir, upon my honour, I did imagine I was vexed, and took a pride in it; but it was, perhaps, cant; for I own I neither ate less, nor slept less."

Johnson. "My dear friend, clear your mind of cant. You may talk as other people do: you may say to a man, 'Sir, I am your most humble servant.' You are not his most humble servant. You may say, 'These are bad times; it is a melancholy thing to be reserved to such times.' You don't mind the times. You tell a man, 'I am sorry you had such bad weather the last day of your journey, and were so much wet.' You don't care sixpence whether he is wet or dry. You may talk in this manner; it is a mode of talking in Society: but don't think foolishly."

61

Howling hallelujah

THE place to take the true measure of a man is not in the darkest place or in the amen corner, nor the cornfield, but by his own fireside. There he lays aside his mask and you may learn whether he is an imp or an angel, cur or king, hero or humbug. I care not what the world says of him : whether it crowns him boss or pelts him with bad eggs. I care not a copper what his reputation or religion may be : if his babies dread his home-coming and his better half swallows her heart every time she has to ask him for a five-dollar bill, he is a fraud of the first water, even though he prays night and morning until he is black in the face and howls hallelujah until he shakes the eternal hills. But if his children rush to the front door to meet him and love's sunshine illuminates the face of his wife every time she hears his footfall, you can take it for granted that he is pure, for his home is a heaven—and the humbug never gets that near the great white throne of God. He may be a rank atheist and red-flag anarchist, a Mormon and a mugwump ; he may buy votes in blocks of five, and bet on the elections ; he may deal 'em from the bottom of the deck and drink beer until he can't tell a silver dollar from a circular saw, and still be an infinitely better man than the cowardly little humbug who is all suavity in society but who makes home a hell, who vents upon the helpless heads of his wife and children an ill nature he would inflict on his fellow men but dares not. I can forgive much in that fellow mortal who would rather make men swear than women weep; who would rather have the hate of the whole world than the contempt of his wife; who would rather call anger to the eyes of a king than fear to the face of a child.

62

Gentleman

If we are asked what is the most essential characteristic that underlies this word, the word itself will guide us to gentleness, to absence of such things as brow-beating, overbearing manners and fuss, and generally to consideration for other people.

63

Strange values

What strange conventions we approve and all too often we dignify them by calling them the code of an English gentleman. High in that code is the affirmation that while you must pay your debts at cards or be ostracised by all decent people, you need not pay your tailor. Did we but realise how few people have been destroyed because they were not able to collect what was owed them at cards, and what thousands have been ruined because they could not collect money due to them for which service was rendered, we might alter some of the now accepted standards of that English code.

64

Good for the Baulk !

A Bull finding a Lion-cub asleep seized the Opportunity to gore it to Death ; on which the Lioness, coming up, began to Lament Bitterly the Decease of her Offspring. A Hunter seeing her Distress stood a Little Way off and said to her, " Think how Many there are who have Reason to Lament the Loss of their Offspring, whose Deaths have been caused by You ! "

As he spoke Thus, a Large Baulk of Wood fell from a Tree and Completely Annihilated him.

Moral.—The Sudden End of a Prig is Always Attractive.

65

In the soup

MY DEAR SIR,—More marriages have been ruined by irritating habits than by unfaithfulness. Are you aware that you make a dreadful noise when you drink your soup? I am sure I saw your Wife wince last night at the sound of your inhalations. For pity's sake amend your habit before your Wife goes off with someone who at least takes his soup like a gentleman.

Yours,
A WELL-WISHER.

66

He's at your club

WE travelled with one of those troublesome fellow-passengers in a stage-coach, that is called a well-informed man. For 20 miles we discoursed about the properties of steam, probabilities of carriages by ditto, till all my science, and more than all, was exhausted, and I was thinking of escaping my torment by getting up on the outside, when, getting into Bishops Stortford, my gentleman, spying some farming land, put an unlucky question to me: "What sort of a crop of turnips I thought we should have this year?" Emma's eyes turned to me, to know what in the world I would have to say; and she burst into a violent fit of laughter, maugre her pale, serious cheeks, when, with the greatest gravity, I replied, that "It depended, I believe, upon boiled legs of mutton." This clenched our conversation, and my Gent:, with a face half wise, half in scorn, troubled us with no more conversation, scientific or philosophical, for the remainder of the journey.

67

So boring

I TRAVELLED the other day with a young Naval officer—a charming youngster. He said "bloody" fifty times in seven minutes, because after getting a little tired of the word I timed him. I said to him, "Do you know you have said 'bloody' fifty times in seven minutes? It is not that I am shocked, only that I am terribly bored." He said, "My God, have I?" I think he is now rationing his "bloodies."

68

Without compromise

To know what you prefer, instead of saying Amen to what the world tells you you ought to prefer, is to have kept your soul alive.

69

I can

Why should we call ourselves men, unless it be to succeed in everything, everywhere? Say of nothing, "This is beneath me," nor feel that anything is beyond your powers. Nothing is impossible to the man who can will.

70

On being tempted

Perpetual undying faith in principles is of the utmost importance. I sometimes think it is the very Alpha and Omega of life. Belief in principles is the only intelligible interpretation I have ever been able to attach to the word faith. A man with faith in principles, even if they be not first-rate, is sure to succeed.

The man who has no faith in them is sure to fail. . . . What we have once *heard*, really heard in our best moments, by that let us abide.

There are moments in which intelligent conviction in the truth of principles disappears, and we are able to do nothing more than fall back on mere dogged determinate resolution to go on ; not to give up what we have once found to be true. This power of dogged determinate resolution, which acts independently of enthusiasm, is a precious possession. A principle cannot for ever appear to us in its pristine splendour. Not only are we tempted to forsake it by other and counter attractions, but it gets wearisome to us because it is a principle. It becomes a fetter, we think. Then it is that faith comes into operation. We hold fast, and by-and-by a third state follows the second, and we emerge into confidence again. . . . I remember once having determined after much deliberation that I ought to undertake a certain task which would occupy me for years. It was one which I could at any moment relinquish. After six months I began to flag, and my great hindrance was, not the confessed desire for rest, but all kinds of the most fascinating principles or pseudo-principles, which flattered what was best and not what was worst in me. I was narrowing my intellect, preventing the proper enjoyment of life, neglecting the sunshine, etc., etc. . . . But I thought to myself, " Now the serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field," and that his temptation was that " your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods." I was enabled to persevere, oftentimes through no other motive than that aforesaid divine doggedness, and presently I was rewarded. . . . This we know is the secret of the Christian religion. It is based upon a Person, and the whole drift of Paul's epistles is this—to turn Christ into a second conscience. More particularly for simple people easily led away, but, indeed, for all people, the importance, the overwhelming importance of maintaining a personal basis for religion cannot be overstated. I only speak my own experience : I am not talking theology or philosophy. I *know* what I am saying, and can point out the times and places when I should have fallen if I had been able to rely for guidance upon nothing better than a commandment or a deduction. But the calm, pure, heroic image of Jesus confronted me, and I succeeded. I had no doubt as to what *He* would have done, and through Him I did not doubt what I ought to do.

71

Exactly!

THERE are two great rules of life, the one general and the other particular. The first is that every one can, in the end, get what he wants if he only tries. This is the general rule. The particular rule is that every individual is, more or less, an exception to the rule.

72

Accelerate

HE who is silent is forgotten; he who abstains is taken at his word; he who does not advance falls back; he who stops is overwhelmed, distanced, crushed; he who ceases to grow greater becomes smaller; he who leaves off, gives up; the stationary condition is the beginning of the end.

73

Safety first

EVERY year I live I am more convinced that the waste of life lies in the love we have not given, the powers we have not used, the selfish prudence that will risk nothing, and which, shirking pain, misses happiness as well. No one ever yet was the poorer in the long run for having once in a lifetime "let out all the length of all the reins."

74

Who sleeps upon his watch

IT is therefore our business carefully to cultivate in our minds, to rear to the most perfect vigour and maturity, every sort of generous and honest feeling that belongs to our nature. To bring the dispositions that are lovely in private life into the service and conduct of the commonwealth ; so to be patriots as not to forget we are gentlemen. To cultivate friendships, and to incur enmities. To have both strong, but both selected : in the one, to be placable ; in the other, immoveable. To model our principles to our duties and our situation. To be fully persuaded that all virtue which is impracticable is spurious; and rather to run the risks of falling into faults in a course which leads us to act with effect and energy, than to loiter out our days without blame, and without use. Public life is a situation of power and energy; he trespasses against his duty who sleeps upon his watch, as well as he that goes over to the enemy.

75

Cause of misery

THUS much I dare boldly say, he or she that is idle, be they of what condition they will, never so rich, so well-allied, fortunate, happy—let them have all things in abundance, and felicity, that heart can wish or desire, all contentment—so long as he or she, or they, are idle, they shall never be pleased, never well in body or mind, but weary still, sickly still, vexed still, loathing still, weeping, sighing, grieving, suspecting, offended with the world, with every object, wishing themselves gone or dead, or else carried away with some foolish phantasie or other. And this is the true cause that so many great men, ladies, and gentle-women labour of this disease in countrey and city; for idleness is an appendix to nobility. . . . When the children of Israel murmured against Pharaoh in Ægypt, he commanded his officers to double their task, and let them get straw themselves, and yet make their full number of bricks: for the sole cause why they mutiny, and are evil at ease, is, *they are idle.*

76

What we do

NOT what I Have . . . but what I Do is my kingdom. To each is given a certain inward Talent, a certain outward Environment of Fortune; to each, by wisest combination of these two, a certain maximum of Capability. But the hardest problem were ever this first: to find by study of yourself, and of the ground you stand on, what your combined inward and outward Capability specially is. For, alas, our young soul is all budding with Capabilities, and we see not yet which is the main and true one. Always too the new man is in a new time, under new conditions; his course can be the facsimile of no prior one, but is by its nature original. And then how seldom will the outward Capability fit the inward : though talented wonderfully enough, we are poor, unfriended, dyspeptical, bashful ; nay, what is worse than all, we are foolish. Thus, in a whole imbroglio of Capabilities, we go stupidly groping about, to grope which is ours, and often clutch the wrong one : in this mad work must several years of our small term be spent, till the purblind Youth, by practice, acquire notions of distance, and become a seeing Man. Nay, many so spend their whole term, and in ever-new expectation, ever-new disappointment, shift from enterprise to enterprise, and from side to side : till at length, as exasperated striplings of threescore and ten, they shift into their last enterprise, that of getting buried.

77

Looking ahead

WE are spinning our own fates, good or evil, never to be undone. Every smallest stroke of virtue or vice leaves its never-so-little scar. The drunken Rip Van Winkle, in

Jefferson's play, excuses himself for every fresh dereliction by saying, "I won't count this time!" Well, he may not count it; and a kind Heaven may not count it; but it is being counted none the less. Down among his nerve-cells and fibers the molecules are counting it, registering and storing it up to be used against him when the next temptation comes. Nothing we ever do is, in strict scientific literalness, wiped out. Of course, this has its good side as well as its bad one. As we become permanent drunkards by so many separate drinks, so we become saints in the moral, and authorities and experts in the practical and scientific spheres, by so many separate acts and hours of work. Let no youth have any anxiety about the upshot of his education, whatever the line of it may be. If he keep faithfully busy each hour of the working day, he may safely leave the final result to itself. He can with perfect certainty count on waking up some fine morning to find himself one of the competent ones of his generation in whatever pursuit he may have singled out. Silently, between all the details of his business, the power of judging in all that class of matter will have built itself up within him as a possession that will never pass away. Young people should know this truth in advance. The ignorance of it has probably engendered more discouragement and faintheartedness in youths embarking on arduous careers than all other causes put together.

78

Good perseverance

WHAT doth it profit a man to fast much and pray and give alms and afflict himself with the overpowering sense of heavenly things if he come not to the blessed haven of the salvation he desireth ; to wit, the haven of good and steadfast perseverance ? Some time this cometh to pass : a certain ship, very fair and mighty and strong and new, and filled with great riches, is seen on the seas ; and it befalleth that through some tempest, or through the fault of the helmsman, this ship perisheth and is wrecked, and miserably sunk, and cometh not to the desired haven. What then availed all her beauty and goodness and riches, since she perished thus miserably in the great waters of the sea ? And, likewise, on a time, some little ship and old appeareth on the sea, with small merchandise ; but having a good and skilful helmsman, she weathers the storm and escapeth from the deep waters of the sea and cometh to the desired haven : and so it befalleth men in this stormy sea of the world. Therefore, said Friar Giles, a man ought ever to fear ; and albeit he abide in great prosperity, or in high estate, or in great dignity, or in great perfection, if he have not a good helmsman, to wit, a wise rule over himself, he may miserably perish in the deep waters of sin. Therefore, above all things, perseverance is needful for well-doing, as the Apostle saith, " Not he that beginneth, but he that persevereth to the end shall win the crown."

79

That overdraft

"MY other piece of advice, Copperfield," said Mr. Micawber, " you know. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen nineteen six, result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds ought and six, result misery. The blossom is blighted, the leaf is withered, the God of Day goes down upon the dreary scene, and—and in short you are for ever floored. . . . As I am ! "

To make his example the more impressive, Mr. Micawber drank a glass of punch with an air of great enjoyment and satisfaction, and whistled the College Hornpipe.

80

The messenger

" SOME one said to the President, ' There's a fellow by the name of Rowan will find Garcia for you, if anybody can.'

" Rowan was sent for and given a letter to be delivered to Garcia. How ' the fellow by the name of Rowan ' took the letter, sealed it up in an oilskin pouch, strapped it over his heart, in four days landed by night off the coast of Cuba from an open boat, disappeared into the jungle, and in three weeks came out on the other side of the Island, having traversed a hostile country on foot, and delivered his letter to Garcia—are things I have no special desire to now tell in detail. The point I wish to make is this: McKinley gave Rowan a letter to be delivered to Garcia; Rowan took the letter and did not ask, ‘Where is he at?’ By the Eternal! there is a man whose form should be cast in deathless bronze and the statue placed in every college in the land. It is not book-learning young men need, nor instruction about this and that, but a stiffening of the vertebrae which will cause them to be loyal to a trust, to act promptly, concentrate their energies: do the thing—‘Carry a message to Garcia.’ . . . I wish to speak a word of sympathy for the man who succeeds—the man who, against great odds, has directed the efforts of others, and having succeeded, finds there's nothing in it: nothing but bare board and clothes. I have carried a dinner-pail and worked for day's wages, and I have also been an employer of labour, and I know there is something to be said on both sides. There is no excellence, *per se*, in poverty; rags are no recommendation; and all employers are not rapacious and high-handed any more than all poor men are virtuous. My heart goes out to the man who does his work when the ‘boss’ is away, as well as when he is at home. And the man who, when given a letter for Garcia, quietly takes the missive, without asking any idiotic questions, and with no lurking intention of chucking it into the nearest sewer, or of doing aught else but deliver it, never gets 'laid off,' nor has to go on strike for higher wages. Civilization is one long, anxious search for just such individuals. Anything such a man asks shall be granted. His act is so rare that no employer can afford to let him go. He is wanted in every city, town and village—in every office, shop, store and factory.

"The world cries out for such; he is needed, and needed badly—the man who can carry a message to Garcia."

81

A happy New Year

I AM writing these lines in the last hours of the year. The New Year is at the door. I am sending my sorrowful good wishes across the Rhine.

I wish for the stupid a little understanding, and for the understanding a little poetry. I wish the most beautiful clothes for the women and much money for the men. I wish a heart for the rich and a little bread for the poor. But, above all, I wish that we may blackguard each other as little as possible during the New Year.

82

Messages

MESSAGES from Him are not to be read through the envelope in which they are enclosed.

83

A receipt

ARISE early, serve God devoutly, and the
world busily.
Do thy work wisely, give thine alms secretly ;
go thy way gravely.
Answer the people demurely, go to thy meat
appetitely.
Sit thereat discretely, arise temperately.
Go to thy supper soberly, and to thy bed
merrily.
Be in thine inn jocundly.
Please thy love duly, and sleep surely.

84

Advice to a son

1. Be courteous of behaviour and affable to all men; there is nothing that winneth so much, with so little cost.

2. Seldom drink wine, yet sometimes do; lest, being forced on a sudden to drink, it should inflame you.

3. Delight to be cleanly; it shall make you graceful in each company, and otherwise you will become loathsome.

4. Let your mirth be ever void of all scurrility and biting words; for a wound given by a word is harder to be cured than that given by a sword.

5. Above all things tell no untruth, not even in trifles; for there cannot be a greater reproach to a Gentleman, than to be accounted a liar.

Your mother and I send you our blessing, and Almighty God grant you His; nourish you with His fear; guide you with His grace, and make you a good servant to your Prince and Country.

85

Courtesy

Of Courtesy, it is much less
Than Courage of Heart or Holiness,
Yet in my Walks it seems to me
That the Grace of God is in Courtesy.

On Monks I did in Storrington fall,
They took me straight into their Hall ;
I saw Three Pictures on a wall,
And Courtesy was in them all.

The first the Annunciation ;
The second the Visitation ;
The third the Consolation,
Of God that was Our Lady's Son.

The first was of Saint Gabriel ;
On Wings a-flame from Heaven he fell ;
And as he went upon one knee
He shone with Heavenly Courtesy.

Our Lady out of Nazareth rode—
It was Her month of heavy load ;
Yet was Her face both great and kind,
For Courtesy was in Her mind.

The third it was our Little Lord,
When all the Kings in arms adored ;
He was so small you could not see
His large intent of Courtesy.

Our Lord, that was Our Lady's Son,
Go bless you, People, one by one ;
My Rhyme is written, my work is done.

86

Outlook

YOU cannot believe in honour until you have achieved it. Better keep yourself clean and bright ; you are the window through which you must see the world.

87

Honour

THERE is an ideal for which true men live, and for which, if need were, they would die. Not to its profit do they look or to any material gain that it can give. Its power over them comes not from pleasure, nor is ambition the secret mainspring of its strength. Without it, wealth has no worth, pleasure no charm, fame no fascination, success no crown. Without it, prosperity crumbles to the value of the dust, and all the finer flowers of human life wither beneath the breath of bitter but just contempt. With it, misfortune may become noble, suffering worshipful, disaster magnificent. It can give to trifles a preciousness greater than gold can buy ; it can transform hardship into happiness ; and round the worst failure it can throw the glory of a true triumph. For, ideal though it be, it has a strange practical power. It is the one test which inexorably unmasks the liar, the knave, or the animal, amongst men, and which faithfully reveals the true, the good, and the noble. It is Honour.

Honour is not the mere absence of what is false, unfair, or foul ; nor is it only the presence of perfect accuracy in truth, of perfect balance in justice, and of perfect becomingness in conduct. Thus honour has a triple aspect, as it regards truth, right, and conduct. But again, under each of these aspects it means much more than what is true, good, worthy. It means what, under each of these aspects, is excellent, refined, noble. It means the highest reverence for truth, the deepest devotedness to right, and the brightest chivalry in conduct.

88

In our hand

THERE are two sorts of people in the world, who, with equal degrees of health and wealth, and the other comforts of life, become, the one happy, and the other miserable. This arises very much from the different views in which they consider things, persons and events ; and the effect of those different views upon their minds.

In whatever situation men can be placed they may find conveniences and inconveniences ; in whatever company, they may find persons and conversation more or less pleasing ; at whatever table, they may meet with meats and drinks of better or worse taste, dishes better or worse dressed ; in whatever climate, they will find good and bad weather ; under whatever government, they may find good and bad laws, and good and bad administration of those laws ; in whatever poem, or work of genius, they may see faults and beauties ; in almost every face and every person they may discover fine features and defects, good and bad qualities.

Under these circumstances the two sorts of people above mentioned fix their attention ;

those who are disposed to be happy, on the convenience of things, the pleasant parts of conversation, the well-dressed dishes, the goodness of the wines, the fine weather, etc., and enjoy all with cheerfulness. Those who are to be unhappy think and speak only of the contraries. Hence they are continually discontented themselves, and by their remarks, sour the pleasures of society, offend personally many people, and make themselves everywhere disagreeable. If this turn of mind was founded in nature, such unhappy persons would be the more to be pitied. But as the disposition to criticise, and to be disgusted, is perhaps taken up originally by imitation, and is unawares grown into a habit, which, though at present strong, may nevertheless be cured, when those who have it are convinced of its bad effects on their felicity . . . If these people will not change this bad habit, and condescend to be pleased with what is pleasing, without fretting themselves and others about the contraries, it is good for others to avoid an acquaintance with them ; which is always disagreeable, and sometimes very inconvenient, especially when one finds one's self entangled in their quarrels.

89

The common tide

The boisterous old notion of hero-worship, which has been preached by so eloquent a voice in our age, is after all now seen to be a half-truth, and to contain the less edifying and the less profitable half of the truth. The world will never be able to spare its hero, and the man with the rare and inexplicable gift of genius will always be as commanding a figure as he has ever been. What we see every day with increasing clearness is that not only the well-being of the many, but the chances of the exceptional genius, moral or intellectual, in the gifted few, are highest in a society where the average interest, curiosity, capacity, are all highest.

The moral of this for you and for me is plain. We cannot, like Beethoven or Handel, lift the soul by the magic of divine melody into the seventh heaven of ineffable vision and hope incommensurable ; we cannot, like Newton, weigh the far-off stars in a balance, and measure the heavings of the eternal flood ; we cannot, like Voltaire, scorch up what is cruel and false by a word as a flame nor, like Milton or Burke, awaken men's hearts with the note of an organ-trumpet ; we cannot, like the great saints of the churches and the great sages of the schools, add to those acquisitions of spiritual beauty and intellectual mastery which have, one by one and little by little, raised man from being no higher than the brute to be only a little lower than the angels. But what we can do (the humblest of us) is, by diligently using our own minds and diligently seeking to extend our own opportunities to others, to help to swell that common tide, on the force and the set of whose currents depends the prosperous voyaging of humanity.

When our names are blotted out, and our place knows us no more, the energy of each social service will remain, and so too, let us not forget, will each social disservice remain, like the unending stream of one of Nature's forces. The thought that this is so may well lighten the poor perplexities of our daily life, and even soothe the pang of its calamities ; it lifts us from our feet as on wings, opening a larger meaning to our private toil and a higher purpose to our public endeavour ; it makes the morning as we awake to it welcome, and the evening like a soft garment as it wraps us about; it nerves our arm with boldness against oppression and injustice, and strengthens our voice with deeper accents against falsehood, while we are yet in the full noon of our days: yes, and perhaps it will shed some ray of consolation when our eyes are growing dim to it all, and we go down to the Valley of the Dark Shadow.

90

The Gauntlet

If you like to apply the name of Evil to all such minor plagues of life as a headache, or the loss of a pleasure, or the unkindness of a friend, nobody will contradict you: but I venture to advise you to keep this word for great occasions. Do not be put off with Shakespeare's phrase about a soul of goodness in things evil: keep the word for that soul of badness, outside things good, which we recognise in experience, but find utterly unintelligible. The wonder of evil, if you limit yourself to wondering, leads you to the grave where Faith and Hope and Charity are buried side by side, without so much as a head-stone over them ; it is that way madness lies. Evil has one thing, and no more, to say to us : Will you fight ? Oh, the ugly bully, so much bigger and stronger than we are, the great beast. In the name of God, off with your coat, and up with your fists. Of course, he will beat you, the brute : still, you may get home on him, once or twice. You may ? No, you will. Then, wash the blood off your face, and give thanks to Heaven as best you can ; and fight him again. See, even the wonder of evil is not so mad as it looks. From the beginning of our world, it has challenged men, after the provoking method of Goliath of Gath. To sit wondering at evil, as a matter of contemplative thought, is sheer stupidity, and worse. To fight is the very act and presence of God. And I am told, on good authority, that they who make a habit of it do, in the long run, score.

91

Toll

FOR Sorrow, like some heavy-hanging bell
Once set a-ringing, by its own weight goes.

92

A solemn moment

Of all the sound of all bells (bells, the music nighest bordering upon heaven) most solemn and touching is the peal which rings out the Old Year. I never hear it without a gathering up of my mind to a concentration of all the images that have been diffused over the past twelvemonth; all I have done or suffered, performed or neglected—in that regretted time.

93

That hump

I can enjoy feeling melancholy, and there is a good deal of satisfaction about being thoroughly miserable; but nobody likes a fit of the blues. Nevertheless, everybody has them; notwithstanding which, nobody can tell why. There is no accounting for them. You are just as likely to have one on the day you have come into a large fortune as on the day after you have left your new silk umbrella in the train.

94

Silver lining

SORROW with his pick mines the heart; but he is a cunning workman. He deepens the channels whereby happiness may enter, and hollows out new chambers for joy to abide in, when he is gone.

95

To-morrow

I OF course am one of the weaklings who, in grumbling at the weather, merely invite compassion. July, this year, is cloudy and windy, very cheerless here in Devon; I fret and shiver and mutter to myself something about summer skies. Pshaw! Were I the average man of my years, I should be striding over Haldon, caring not a jot for the heavy sky, finding a score of compensations for the lack of sun. Can I not have patience? Do I not know that, some morning, the east will open like a bursting bud into warmth and splendour, and the azure depths above will have only the more solace for my starved anatomy because of this protracted disappointment?

96

Time is not

For when the heart is in stress, what is time? It is nought. Does the bridegroom, that has clemmed for his love a long while, hearken to the watchman's voice telling over the hastening hours? Does he that dies in the dawn care to what hour the dial points when the sun arises, that rises not on him? And when we poor beings take up our stand against all the might of the things that be, striving to win through to our peace, when we are dumbfounded like a baited creature in a bull-ring, then we forget time.

97

Precious laughter

Ah! those be the ways grouse laugh, and that was how I laughed in those days. But now I sit here between the hearth and the window, with the tea brewing for one that will be home before sundown, and the clouds standing upon the mountains, and when I laugh, I laugh easy, like the woodpecker in spring. He was ever a laugher, was the woodpecker, and a right merry laugher too. He'll fly into an ellum tree, and laugh to see it so green. And he'll fly into an ash, and laugh to see it so bare, with only the black buds and no leaves. And then he'll fly into an oak, and laugh fit to burst to see the young brown leaves. Ah, the woodpecker's a good laugher, and the laughter's sweet as a sound nut. If we can laugh so at the end of long living, we've not lived in vain.

98

Mark over

YOU cannot prevent the birds of sadness from flying over your head, but you can prevent them building nests in your hair.

99

Be an angel

FOOLS, says Pope, rush in where angels fear to tread : but I am sure that angels rush in where fools fear to tread. There are many fools who are afraid of treading anywhere. But angels rush in, without fear, everywhere : and, the more fearsome a place looks, the more haste they make to tread it. They leave the fool outside, shuffling with embarrassment, self-conscious, half-hearted, wondering if and whether, and letting I dare not wait upon I would. For instance, when the people next-door lost their only child, there was a fool who left his card, because he was afraid to go in : but there was an angel who rushed in, and broke down, and cried, so that the other two found their tears ; and it was time they did, or one of them would have gone out of her mind.

100

A pestilent fellow

I DESCRIBED to him an impudent fellow from Scotland, who affected to be a savage, and railed at all established systems. *Johnson.* " There is nothing surprizing in this, Sir. He wants to make himself conspicuous. He would tumble in a hogstye, as long as you looked at him and called to him to come out. But let him alone, never mind him, and he'll soon give it over." I added that the same person maintained that there was no distinction between virtue and vice. *Johnson.* " Why, Sir, if the fellow does not think as he speaks, he is lying; and I see not what honour he can propose to himself from having the character of a lyar. But if he does really think that there is no distinction between virtue and vice, why, Sir, when he leaves our houses let us count our spoons."

101

Ordinary decency

IT does not seem to me that a decent self-respecting person should cheat the railway company by travelling first class with a third-class ticket, or even by travelling without a ticket at all. Yet people boast of the fact that they have done it and have no hesitation in expressing the hope that they will do it many times again.

102

The point of view

OUR Lord and his disciples were walking one day along the sea-shore, and they came upon the place where the carcass of a dead dog was lying. And one disciple, turning away his eyes, said, "The horrid sight." And another, putting his hand before his nose, cried, "The loathsome stench." But Jesus, looking upon it, said, "The teeth are white as pearls."

103

The open mind

NEITHER despise, nor oppose, what thou dost not understand.

104

Cowslips

A MAN ranged cowslips on a stall, and wondered how many he should give for a penny. And another man passing caught the gleam and odour of them, and had a vision of a blue valley touched with gold, and April scattering desultory rains.

105

Tread softly

DAUGHTER, daughter! don't call names; you are always abusing my pleasures, which is what no mortal will bear. Trash, lumber, sad stuff, are the titles you give my favourite amusements. If I called a white staff a stick of wood, a gold key gilded brass, and the ensign of illustrious orders coloured strings, this may be philosophically true, but would be very ill received. We have all our playthings; happy are they that can be contented with those they can obtain.

106

Forgiveness

The heart that forgives an injury is like the perforated shell of a mussel, which closes its wound with a pearl.

107

Divine common sense

My neighbour, or my servant, or my child, has done me an injury, and it is just that he should suffer an injury in return. Such is the doctrine which Jesus Christ summoned His whole resources of persuasion to oppose. "Love your enemy; bless those that curse you": such, He says, is the practice of God, and such must ye imitate if ye would be the children of God.

108

Admit it

A MAN should never be ashamed to own that he has been in the wrong, which is but saying in other words that he is wiser to-day than he was yesterday.

109

A tough job

WHO seeks to please all men each way
  And not himself offend,
He may begin his work to-day,
  But God knows when he'll end.

110

Forgiveness

STUNG by a spiteful wasp,
I let him go life free :
That proved the difference
In him and me.

For, had I killed my foe,
It had proved me at once
The stronger wasp, and no
More difference.

III

Sorry

THERE is hardly an offence so great but if it be frankly apologised for it is easily both forgiven and forgotten. There is hardly an offence so small but it rankles if he who has committed it does not express proportionate regret. Expressions of regret help genuine regret and induce amendment of life, much as digging a channel helps water to flow, though it does not make the water. If a man refuses to make them and habitually indulges his own selfishness at the expense of what is due to other people, he is no better than a drunkard or a debauchee, and I have no more respect for him than I have for the others.

We all like to forgive, and we all love best not those who offend us least, nor those who have done most for us, but those who make it most easy for us to forgive them.

So a man may lose both his legs and live for years in health if the amputation has been clean and skilful, whereas a pea in his boot may set up irritation which must last as long as the pea is there and may in the end kill him.

112

His point of view

WHILE travelling on the Underground Railway recently I caught sight of a poster headed " Good morning, Bill." It was an advertisement of a play running somewhere in London, but it switched my mind back over a long period of years to the time when I made my first appearance as an apprentice in an engineering shop. We had a big bearded foreman who opened the shop door for us punctually at seven o'clock every morning. I was quite new to the atmosphere of a workshop and was anxious to do the polite and correct thing towards everybody. So as I filed in with the men when the door opened I looked shyly up at the foreman and said, " Good morning." He stared solemnly over my head and took not the slightest notice. I thought he had not heard me, so the following morning, and for several mornings afterwards I repeated my friendly greeting. He still ignored me entirely. " What a surly, disagreeable chap he is," I thought to myself ; I abandoned my efforts to be polite, and from then on always walked past him with my nose in the air like the rest. I discovered in time that though naturally somewhat gruff and taciturn in disposition, he was not really such a bad fellow after all. I was very young, and there were lots of things about men, and about life, I did not understand. That foreman was responsible for the efficiency and output of the shop ; he was responsible for the discipline of the shop, and he doubtless had far more worries and troubles on his mind than I had on mine. Probably when we were going into the shop in the morning his mind was already occupied with the problems of the day's work. He had a thousand things to think of and provide for ; I had only to walk to my bench and start to file or drill a piece of iron or brass. How could he be expected to be sociable with me, the newest and least important person in the works ? Moreover, it was highly probable that before the morning was over he would be slanging me good and hard, for breaking a tap, or drilling a hole in the wrong place, or for some other crime of an incompetent beginner. We all get jars of this kind sometime in our lives ; people are thoughtless, or neglectful, or rude to us when we think we do not deserve it, but if we appreciated all the facts of the case, and knew more about the other fellow's worries and troubles, we should probably be more forgiving in our judgment. Apprentices and the younger men in engineering come up against this kind of thing frequently in the course of their career, and I quote my own experience as a youngster because it taught me a useful lesson. Just as my old foreman had his responsibilities and troubles to think about, so your foreman or your boss may have his mind equally occupied when you go to him and ask him for a rise, or a change of work, or some other concession. If you get a short answer, it may not be altogether the other fellow's fault. The foreman may be worried about some breakdown in the plant, or some non-delivery of materials that are urgently wanted, or some department that is behindhand with its work. The boss may be scheming out the details of that contract he is trying to get to keep the works going, or may be miserable because of the contract he has just lost. He may be puzzling over his balance-sheet which shows that he is losing money instead of making it, or he may even be wondering where on earth the money is coming from to pay your next week's wages. The French have a proverb : *Comprendre c'est pardonner*—"To understand is to forgive." So when some of the little personal jars of life come your way, in the workshop, or in business, or wherever it may be, try to remember that if you understood, you would probably forgive.

113

The spirit released

LIFE appears to me to be too short to be spent in nursing animosity or in registering wrongs. We are, and must be, one and all, burdened with faults in this world ; but the time will come when, I trust, we shall put them off in putting off our corruptible bodies : when debasement and sin will fall from us and only the spark will remain, the impalpable principle of life and thought, pure as when it left the Creator to inspire the creature : whence it came, it will return, perhaps to pass through gradations of glory.

It is a creed in which I delight, to which I cling. It makes Eternity a rest, a mighty home ; not a terror and an abyss. Besides, with this creed revenge never worries my heart, degradation never too deeply disgusts me, injustice never crushes me too low: I live in calm looking to the end.

114

I thought Love lived

I THOUGHT Love lived in the hot sunshine,
But O, he lives in the moony light!
I thought to find Love in the heat of day,
But sweet Love is the comforter of night.

Seek Love in the pity of others' woe,
In the gentle relief of another's care,
In the darkness of night and the winter's snow,
With the naked and outcast—seek Love there.

115

Poor Dives

REMOVE from thyself all provocations and incentives to anger . . . in not heaping up with an ambitious or curious prodigality any very curious or choice utensils, seals, jewels, glasses, precious stones; because those very many accidents which happen in the loss or spoiling of these rarities, are in event an irresistible cause of violent anger.

116

It was received

NOR was this blessed sacrifice expressed only at his death, but in his life also, by a cheerful and frequent visitation of any friend whose mind was dejected, or his fortune necessitous; he was inquisitive after the wants of prisoners, and redeemed many from prison that lay for their fees or small debts: he was a continual giver to poor scholars, both of this and foreign nations. Besides what he gave with his own hand, he usually sent a servant, or a discreet and trusty friend, to distribute his charity to all the prisons in London, at all the festival times of the year, especially at the birth and resurrection of our Saviour. He gave an hundred pounds at one time to an old friend, whom he had known live plentifully, and by a too liberal heart and carelessness became decayed in his estate; and when the receiving of it was denied, by the gentleman's saying, "He wanted not" ;—for the reader may note, that as there be some spirits so generous as to labour to conceal and endure a sad poverty, rather than expose themselves to those blushes that attend the confession of it ; so there be others, to whom nature and grace have afforded such sweet and compassionate souls, as to pity and prevent the distresses of mankind ;—which I have mentioned because of Dr. Donne's reply, whose answer was : "I know you want not what will sustain nature ; for a little will do that ; but my desire is, that you, who in the days of your plenty have cheered and raised the hearts of so many of your dejected friends, would now receive this from me, and use it as a cordial for the cheering of your own" : and upon these terms it was received.

117

Let it rip

THERE is one Noise, a Master Noise, which to some may be hackneyed, to others harsh, to others meaningless, to others dull, to others tuneless, but to me exquisite, soothing, rare, and never-too-often-to-be-repeated : the noise (forgive my quaint frenzy) of great fat cheques being ripped violently from their moorings and presented unawares to poor men. "Match me" (as the Don sang, but referring to a rose-red city of the East)—

"Match me such marvel, whether East or West,
So full of blooming ecstasy and zest."

I have done.

118

Christ the man

LORD, I say nothing ; I profess
No faith in Thee nor Christ Thy Son :
Yet no man ever heard me mock
A true believing one.

If knowledge is not great enough
To give a man believing power,
Lord, he must wait in Thy great hand
Till revelation's hour.

Meanwhile he'll follow Christ the man,
In that humanity he taught,
Which to the poor and the oppressed
Gives its best time and thought.

119

Strong moments

SOMETIMES I hear fine ladies sing,
Sometimes I smoke and drink with men;
Sometimes I play at games of cards—
Judge me to be no strong man then.

The strongest moment of my life
Is when I think about the poor;
When, like a spring that rain has fed,
My pity rises more and more.

The flower that loves the warmth and light
Has all its mornings bathed in dew;
My heart has moments wet with tears,
My weakness is they are so few.

120

Rake not always

READER, do not be frightened at the hard words imposition, imposture—*give, and ask no questions.* Cast thy bread upon the waters. Some have unawares entertained angels. Shut not thy purse strings always against painted distress. Act a charity sometimes. When a poor creature (outwardly and visibly such) comes before thee, do not stay to enquire whether the "seven small children" in whose name he implores thy assistance, have a veritable existence. Rake not in the bowels of unwelcome truth to save a halfpenny. It is good to believe him. If he be not all that he pretendeth, *give*, and under a personate father of a family, think (if thou pleasest) that thou hast relieved an indigent bachelor.

121

Juniper

So much pity and compassion had Friar Juniper for the poor that when he saw any one ill clad or naked, anon he would take off his tunic, and the cowl from his cloak, and give them to poor souls such as these. Therefore the warden commanded him, by obedience, not to give away the whole of his tunic, nor any part of his habit. Now it fell out that Friar Juniper, ere a few days had passed, happened on a poor creature, well-nigh naked, who asked alms of him for love of God, to whom he said with great compassion, "Naught have I, save my tunic, to give thee ; and this my superior hath laid on me, by obedience, to give to no one ; nay, nor even part of my habit ; but if thou wilt take it off my back, I will not gainsay thee." He spake not to deaf ears, for straightway this poor man stripped him of his tunic and went his way with it, leaving Friar Juniper naked. And when he was back at the friary, he was asked where his tunic was, and he answered, " An honest fellow took it from my back and made off with it." And the virtue of pity increasing within him, he was not content with giving away his tunic, but likewise gave books and church ornaments and cloaks, or anything he could lay hands on, to the poor. And for this reason the friars never left things lying about the friary, because Friar Juniper gave all away for love of God and in praise of Him.

122

Certain little bells

FRIAR JUNIPER, being on a time in Assisi, at the Nativity of Christ, engaged in deep meditation at the altar of the friary, which was richly decked and adorned, was asked by the sacristan to guard the said altar while he went to eat. And while he was in devout meditation, a poor little woman begged alms of him for love of God: to whom Friar Juniper thus answered, "Tarry a while and I will see if I can give thee aught from this altar so rich." Now there was on that altar a hanging of gold, richly and sumptuously adorned with little silver bells of great worth. Saith Friar Juniper, "These bells are a superfluity." So he takes a knife and cuts them all from the hanging, and gives them, out of compassion, to this poor little woman. No sooner had the sacristan eaten three or four mouthfuls than he remembered the ways of Friar Juniper, and was sore afraid lest out of his zealous charity he might work some mischief to the rich altar he had left in his charge. And straightway he rose from the table, in much dread, and went to the church and looked to see if any of the ornaments of the altar had been removed or taken away; and lo, he beheld the hanging hacked about and the bells cut off: whereat he was beyond all measure perturbed and scandalised. And Friar Juniper, beholding him thus agitated, saith, "Be not troubled about those bells, for

I have given them to a poor woman that had very great need of them, and here they were of no use, save that they made a show of worldly pomp." Hearing this, the sacristan ran straightway through the church and about the whole city, in great affliction, to see if haply he might find her. But so far from finding her, he could not even find any one that had seen her. Returning to the friary, he took the hanging from the altar, in a great rage, and carried it to the general that was at Assisi, and said, "Father-general, I demand of you justice on Friar Juniper, who hath spoiled this hanging for me, that was the most precious thing in our sacristy; look now how he hath destroyed it and stripped off all the little silver bells, and he saith he hath given them away to a poor woman." The general answered, "Friar Juniper hath not done this, rather hath thy folly done it, for thou oughtest by this time to know his ways well; and I say unto thee, I marvel that he hath not given away all the rest; but none the less I will correct him for his fault." And having called all the friars together in Chapter, he bade call Friar Juniper, and in the presence of the whole house rebuked him very harshly because of the aforesaid little bells ; and he waxed so furious in his wrath, that by raising his voice so high he grew quite hoarse. Friar Juniper heeded those words little or naught, for he rejoiced in contumely and when he was well abased ; but returning good for evil, he began to think only how he might find a remedy for his general's harshness. So having endured the general's scolding, Friar Juniper goes to the city and orders a good dish of porridge and butter ; and a good part of the night being spent, he goes and lights a candle and comes back with this mess of porridge and takes it to the general's cell and knocks. The general opens to him, and beholding him with a lighted candle in one hand and the dish of porridge in the other, asks softly, "What is this?" Friar Juniper answered, "My father, to-day, when you chid me for my faults, I perceived that your voice was growing hoarse, and; as I ween, from over-fatigue ; therefore I bethought me of a remedy, and I had this porridge made for thee ; pray eat thereof, for I tell thee it will ease thy chest and throat." Said the general, "What hour is this for thee to go disturbing folk?" Friar Juniper answered, "Look now, for thee 'tis made; prithee make no more ado, but eat thereof, for 'twill do thee much good." And the general, angry at the late hour and at his importunity, bade him begone, for at such an hour he had no desire to eat, and called him a base fellow and a caitiff. Friar Juniper, seeing that neither prayer nor coaxing was of any avail, spake thus, "My father, since thou wilt not eat of this porridge that was made for thee, at least do me this favour: hold the candle for me, and I will eat it." And the pious and devout general, bearing in mind Friar Juniper's compassion and simplicity, and knowing that all this was done by him out of devotion, answered, "Look now, since thou wilt have it so, let us eat, thou and I, together." And both ate of this dish of porridge, because of his importunate charity. And much more were they refreshed by their devotion than by the food.

FOR PEACE OF MIND

123

The real things

WHAT then remains? Courage, and patience, and simplicity, and kindness, and, last of all, ideas remain; and these are the things to lay hold of and to live with.

124

Thy hut

"LISTEN to the moaning of the pine, at whose root thy hut is fastened"—a saying, that, of wild Finland, in which there is wisdom; I listened, and thought of life and death.

125

Be sometimes alone

BY all means use sometimes to be alone.
Salute thyself: see what thy soul doth wear.
Dare to look in thy chest; for 'tis thine own:
And tumble up and down what thou find'st there.
Who cannot rest till he good fellows finde,
He breaks up house, turns out of doores his minde.

126

Can you idle?

ANY man can be fussy and rid himself of energy all over the place, but a man has to have something in him before he can settle down to do nothing. He must have reserves to draw upon, must be able to plunge into strange slow rivers of dream and reverie, must be at heart a poet.

127

Peace

I SAT long on the starlit deck that night, thinking of ships, and watching the constellations on their voyage.

128

Leisure

WHAT is this life, if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare?

No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like stars at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.

No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

129

Sweet content

ART thou poor, yet thou hast golden slumbers ?
O sweet content !
Art thou rich, yet is thy mind perplexed ?
O punishment !
Dost thou laugh to see how fools are vex'd
To add to golden numbers golden numbers ?
O sweet content !
O sweet, O sweet content !
Work apace, apace, apace, apace ;
Honest labour bears a lovely face ;
Then hey nonny nonny—hey nonny nonny !

Canst drink the waters of the crispèd spring?
O sweet content!
Swim'st thou in wealth, yet sink'st in thine own
tears?
O punishment!
Then he that patiently want's burden bears,
No burden bears, but is a king, a king!
O sweet content!
O sweet, O sweet content!
Work apace, apace, apace, apace;
Honest labour bears a lovely face;
Then hey nonny nonny—hey nonny nonny!

130

Manhood

LIVE unto the Dignity of thy Nature, and leave it not disputable at last, whether thou hast been a Man; or, since thou art a composition of Man and Beast, how thou hast predominantly passed thy days, to state the denomination. Unman not therefore thyself by a beastial transformation, nor realize old Fables. Expose not thyself by four-footed manners unto monstrous draughts, and caricatura representations. Think not after the old

Pythagorean conceit, what Beast thou may'st be after death. Be not under any brutal metempsychosis while thou livest, and walkest about erectly under the scheme of Man. In thine own circumference, as in that of the Earth, let the rational Horizon be larger than the sensible, and the Circle of Reason than of Sense. Let the Divine part be upward, and the Region of Beast below. Otherwise, 'tis but to live invertedly, and with thy Head unto the Heels of thy Antipodes. Desert not thy title to a Divine particle and union with invisibles. Let true knowledge and Virtue tell the lower World thou art a part of the higher. Let thy Thoughts be of things which have not entered into the Hearts of Beasts ; think of things long past, and long to come ; acquaint thyself with the Choragium of the Stars, and consider the vast expansion beyond them.

131

Be simple

CULTIVATE simplicity, Coleridge, or rather, I should say, banish elaborateness ; for simplicity springs spontaneous from the heart, and carries into daylight its own buds of genuine, sweet, and clear flowers of expression.

132

Phew!

I WISHT I was a little rock
  A-settin' on a hill;
A-doin' nothing all day long
  But just a-settin' still.
I wouldn't eat, I wouldn't drink,
  I wouldn't even wash.
I'd set and set a thousand years,
  And rest myself, by Gosh!

133

Aiming high

IT is a law of this universe that the best things shall be seldomest seen in their best form. . . . And therefore, while in all things that we see, or do, we are to desire perfection, and strive for it, we are nevertheless not to set the nearer thing, in its narrow accomplishment, above the nobler thing in its mighty progress; not to esteem smooth minuteness above shattered majesty; not to prefer mean victory to honourable defeat; not to lower the level of our aim, that we may more surely enjoy the complacency of success.

134

Yt is better

HIGHE towers by strong wyndes full lowe be cast,
When the lowe cottages stand sure and fast,
Therefore with sureness yt is better in povertie t'abide,
Thanne hastily to be riche and sodeynly to slyde.

135

Life wind

A MAN'S mind ought to be taut as a sail pressed by the wind. Sails, if the pressure of the wind were strong and constant, were vibrant with life to their bolt-ropes—not a hesitation of the canvas disturbed the urgency of their business. Life ought to keep people like that. The wind of the spirit should blow them into purposefulness—the wind of the spirit which is life. But most people hadn't enough life. They were half dead, as though they hung perpetually in the doldrums, disturbed rather than aided by the uncertain airs. People ought to go through the world parting its clamorous waters with a certainty that enabled them to sail on a taut bowline, and instead they hung in the wind, caught all aback. . . .

136

Wonder

Ah, let me talk sense. You and I know well that I have not yet touched, nor been within a mile of touching, the true wonder of Self. All this talk about time and space, and men and mice in round rooms, has nothing to do with it. The true wonder of you and me is not an affair of logic nor of science : it is an affair of will and conduct. Though it is wonderful, past all telling, that a man is able to distinguish red from blue, and his fingers from his toes, and to-day from to-morrow, yet the wonderfullest fact about him is, that he can distinguish I will from I will not, and right from wrong ; that he possesses not only conscientiousness but a conscience ; that he not only is here, but is here for purposes which are outside all that we usually mean by the word Nature.

137

Child of Freedom

"What *art* thou afraid of? Wherefore, like a coward, dost thou forever pip and whimper, and go cowering and trembling? Despicable biped! what is the sum-total of the worst that lies before thee? Death? Well, Death; and say the pangs of Tophet too, and all that the Devil and Man may, will, or can do against thee! Hast thou not a heart; canst thou not suffer whatsoever it be; and, as a Child of Freedom, though outcast, trample Tophet itself under thy feet, while it consumes thee? Let it come, then; I will meet it and defy it!" And as I so thought, there rushed like a stream of fire over my whole soul; and I shook base Fear away from me forever. . . . Thus had the Everlasting No (*das ewige Nein*) pealed authoritatively through all the recesses of my Being, of my Me; and then was it that my whole Me stood up, in native God-created majesty, and with emphasis recorded its

Protest. Such a Protest, the most important transaction in Life, may that same Indignation and Defiance, in a psychological point of view, be fitly called. The Everlasting No had said : " Behold, thou art fatherless, outcast, and the Universe is mine (the Devil's) " ; to which my whole Me now made answer : " I am not thine, but Free, and forever hate thee ! "

138

Star-dust

If one listens to the faintest but constant suggestions of his genius, which are certainly true, he sees not to what extremes, or even insanity, it may lead him ; and yet that way, as he grows more resolute and faithful, his road lies. The faintest assured objection which one healthy man feels will at length prevail over the arguments and customs of mankind. No man ever followed his genius till it misled him. Though the results were bodily weakness, yet perhaps no man can say that the consequences were to be regretted, for these were a life in conformity to higher principles. If the day and the night are such that you greet them with joy, and life emits a fragrance like flowers and sweet-scented herbs, is more elastic, more starry, more immortal—that is your success. All nature is your conflagration, and you have cause momentarily to bless yourself. The greatest gains and values are farthest from being appreciated. We easily come to doubt if they exist. We soon forget them. They are the highest reality. Perhaps the facts most astounding and most real are never communicated by man to man. The true harvest of my daily life is somewhat as intangible and indescribable as the tints of morning or evening. It is a little star-dust caught, a segment of the rainbow which I have clutched.

139

Three ladies

THE one gift which I pray is COURAGE. Three ladies whom we know, elderly now, daughters of a publisher, successor to old Newbury who was at the corner of St. Paul's Churchyard a hundred years ago, were swindled out of almost every penny of their money by fraudulent trustees at their father's death. Gently brought up, they were not daunted, and started a typewriting office in Norfolk Street, Strand, enduring actual hardship and obliged to work all night when stuff came to be copied in the evening which had to be returned early next morning. Last week we heard from them. One had been in a nursing home with pleurisy. Just as she was getting better, after a month's dangerous illness, her sister had to go into a hospital with sciatica. It fell entirely to the third sister to keep the typewriting going. The letter one of them wrote to us is such as one of the Spartans might have written after " combing his long hair " in the pass of Thermopylae. The clouds are breaking for them a bit now, I am thankful to say. How the simple, brave words of these women did shame me !

140

Bloody but unbowed

During the winter I have been trying to learn to ride the bicycle, and have at last succeeded, but of course the innate depravity of human nature at present displays itself forcibly, and I deviate from rectitude apparently for no reason whatever. You would hardly believe how difficult it is for a man of 55 to learn. The body has lost its flexibility and power of balance. Once I fell off and was strapped up all round my chest—could do nothing for a fortnight—and on a second occasion I was pitched suddenly on a heap of stones, rendering my hands incapable for a week. But the worst of all was that for a month I did not seem to make the slightest progress. However, I made up my mind that I would persevere day after day till a certain date fixed far ahead, and that then I would yield if not successful. At last I had vouchsafed to me a ray of hope and then got into smoother waters. The roads, too, have been all against me, as bad as they could possibly be.

Do you know why I went on? Do you remember the sarcasm applied by a certain lady who shall be nameless to the "armchairified" tricycle riders who went up Union Street? What would that lady have had to answer for, if I had been killed!

But partly also the reason was that I am scientifically curious as to the limits of a man's powers, and more particularly middle-age powers, and do not like defeat. Shelley used to say, " I always go on till I am stopped." I went on a good deal after I was stopped—by stone-heaps to wit.

141

Aunt Anne

OCTOBER. I wonder why it should be so very difficult to be humble. I do not think I am a good writer ; I realize my faults better than anyone else could realize them. I know exactly where I fail. And yet, when I have finished a story and before I have begun another, I catch myself preening my feathers. It is disheartening. There seems to be some bad old pride in my heart ; a root of it that puts out a thick shoot on the slightest provocation. . . . This interferes very much with work. One can't be calm, clear, good as one must be, while it goes on. I look at the mountains, I try to pray and I think of something clever. It's a kind of excitement within, which shouldn't be there. Calm yourself. Clear yourself. And anything that I write in this mood will be no good ; it will be full of sediment. If I were well, I would go off by myself somewhere and sit under a tree. One must learn, one must practise, to forget oneself. I can't tell the truth about Aunt Anne unless I am free to look into her life without self-consciousness. Oh God ! I am divided still. I am bad. I fail in my personal life. I lapse into impatience, temper, vanity, and so I fail as thy priest. Perhaps poetry will help.

142

On taking courage

This gloomy northern sky,
Or this yet gloomier night,
Has moved a something high
In my cold heart, and I,
That do not often pray,
Would pray to-night.

And first on thee I call
For bread, O God of might !
Enough of bread for all—
That through the famished town
Cold hunger may lie down
With none to-night.

I pray for hope no less,
Strong-sinewed hope, O Lord,
That to the struggling young
May preach with brazen tongue
Stout Labour, high success,
And bright reward.

And last, O Lord, I pray
For hearts resigned and bold
To trudge the dusty way—
Hearts stored with song and joke
And warmer than a cloak
Against the cold.

If nothing else he had,
He who has this, has all.
This comforts under pain ;
This, through the stinging rain,
Keeps ragamuffin glad
Behind the wall.

This makes the sanded inn
A palace for a Prince,
And this, when griefs begin
And cruel fate annoys,
Can bring to mind the joys
Of ages since.

143

Unbearable suffering

I HAVE suffered much, but I am now convinced that no man has any right to grumble if he can be ill without the torture of feeling that if his illness continues there will be poverty and inadequate education for those he loves. Be understanding with those who in their illness are haunted by fears for the future; understand what lies behind their complaining, and ask God to prevent you from being clumsy when you try to give them a message of hope.

144

The Good Doctor

I DO not want to die without leaving a record of my belief that suffering can be overcome. For I do believe it. What must one do? There is no question of what is called "passing beyond it." This is false.

One must submit. Do not resist. Take it. Be overwhelmed. Accept it fully. Make it part of life.

Everything in life that we really accept undergoes a change. So suffering must become Love. This is the mystery. This is what I must do. I must pass from personal love to greater love. I must give to the whole of life what I gave to one. The present agony will pass—if it doesn't kill. It won't last. Now I am like a man who has had his heart torn out—but—bear it—bear it! As in the physical world, so in the spiritual world, pain does not last for ever. It is only so terribly acute now. It is as though a ghastly accident had happened. If I can cease reliving all the shock and horror of it, cease going over it, I will get stronger.

Here, for a strange reason, rises the figure of Doctor Sorapure. He was a good man. He helped me not only to bear pain, but he suggested that perhaps bodily ill-health is necessary, is a repairing process, and he was always telling me to consider how man plays but a part in the history of the world. My simple kindly doctor was pure of heart as Tchehov was pure of heart. But for these ills one is one's own doctor. If "suffering" is not a repairing process, I will make it so. I will learn the lesson it teaches. These are not idle words. These are not the consolations of the sick.

Life is a mystery. The fearful pain will fade. I must turn to work. I must put my agony into something, change it. "Sorrow shall be changed into joy."

It is to lose oneself more utterly, to love more deeply, to feel oneself part of life,—not separate.

Oh Life! accept me—make me worthy—teach me.

145

Song of pain and beauty

O MAY these days of pain,
These wasted-seeming days,
Somewhere reflower again
With scent and savour of praise,
Draw out of memory all bitterness
Of night with Thy sun's rays.

And strengthen Thou in me
The love of men here found,
And eager charity,
That, out of difficult ground,
Spring like flowers in barren deserts, or
Like light, or a lovely sound.

A simpler heart than mine
Might have seen beauty clear
When I could see no sign
Of Thee, but only fear.
Strengthen me, make me to see
Thy beauty always
In every happening here.

146

A great citizen

LORD CURZON was a man who erected a facade about himself, and a façade which deceived many people, and was the product of a natural shyness, an intense and exquisite sensitiveness. It is no uncommon thing, as each of us may know in our own lives, and moving amongst the men we know, that human beings in this world who suffer from sensitiveness do put something between themselves and their fellow-men to ward off the shafts which they dread ; yet underneath there beats the kindest, warmest, human heart.

There was a nature, contrary to what many might believe who did not know him, of the uttermost simplicity—the eternal boy lived in him until the last week of his life. He was the soul of loyalty to his colleagues, he bore no grudges in political life, he pursued a straight course ; and all this in the face of daily and constant physical suffering. Of that many knew nothing, because it was a thing of which he never spoke. But I have seen him at the Cabinet, I have seen him at a dinner-party, and if he were not able to have the necessary cushions to support his back, his suffering would be as the suffering of a man on the rack, and that he fought against day by day. When we look back upon him I feel that what Lord Rosebery said of William Pitt is so true of him, that, whatever men may feel about his life or his acts, they must be agreed that England had in this generation no more patriotic spirit, none more intrepid, and none more pure.

I want before I sit down to say one or two things that no one but I can say. A Prime Minister sees human nature bared to the bone, and it was my chance to see him twice when he suffered great disappointment—the time when I was preferred to him as Prime Minister, and the time when I had to tell him that he could render greater service to the country as chairman of the Committee of Imperial Defence than in the Foreign Office.

Each of those occasions was a profound and bitter disappointment to him, but never for one moment did he show by word, look, or innuendo, or by any reference to the subject afterwards, that he was dissatisfied. He bore no grudge, and he pursued no other course than the one I expected of him, of doing his duty where it was decided that he could best render service. I felt on both those occasions that I had seen in him, in that strange alloy which we call human nature, a vein of the purest gold.

He died as he would have desired, and as we would all desire to die, in harness, a harness put on himself in youth and worn triumphantly through a long life, a harness which he never cast off until his feet had entered the river.

It may well be, when we look back on that life of devoted service to his country and of a perpetual triumph of the spirit over the flesh, that in some places in this Earth, early on that Friday morning, there may have been heard faint echoes of the trumpets that sounded for him on the other side.

147

Harley Street

SOMEHOW everything seems so artificial at the moment. Even the light striking across the houses in Harley Street appears to be unreal, and the voices and sounds of people and things that pass seem alien to the world in which I live. My number is up, so the doctor said, and yet I expect I shall live much longer than he prophesies ; but still my number is up. How now to go back and be gallant at home? God give me grace for that at least, so that later She may say, " Your father was brave," and they may say still later, " We remember how brave father was."

148

The operation

THIS is a curious, strange, haunting night. To-morrow the surgeons will arrive, and I am for the theatre at what time most men will be breakfasting. I suppose I should not fear, but I do fear mightily. There is something uncanny in this night before an operation.

I hardly like to say prayers. It seems so grovelling since I have not said them for years, and yet perhaps if what they say is true, that He is as a father, He would welcome even this funk of mine if it should bring me back to where He is waiting to receive me. I remember something about the son who was out in a far country, and how when he was yet a great way off the father ran and kissed him.

149

My neighbours

YEAR by year, as I grow older, I get more impatient with the misanthropes. Say what one will about the vices and follies of man, how immense are his virtues ! Think steadily, if you can, of the incredible things that he suffers—his hard toil, his struggle for bread and home, the smallness of his reward, his undeserved calamities, the slaughter of his affections, and through it all his indomitable spirit and courage as he gathers himself from the dust or the mire, and plants his feet again on his rough and uncertain road. The shallow rich talk much of the turbulence of the poor and their tendency to agitate. It is the patience of the poor which most strikes those who know them.

150

The Challenge

THERE is a dream of human progress which makes it to consist in a gradual easing of the lot of man, in the gradual lightening of his task, until the last straw of difficulty has been lifted out of his path, the last peril extinguished, the last lee-shore weathered and all smooth sailing for ever afterwards. May it never come true ! Man is not made to live under those conditions ; the lines on which he is built are far too high and large to fit into them. He will never accommodate himself to an easy life, unless we are to assume that his nature has degenerated in the meantime. Ill adapted for living an easy life, he is well adapted for living a difficult one. It is precisely when his circumstances are easiest that he gives the poorest account of himself, and the best when he is fighting against odds. Never is he more at home in this universe than when he finds himself " upon an engagement very difficult." " It behoves the son of man to suffer many things, that he may enter into his glory." Give him a life in which suffering plays no part, and you defraud him at the core of his being. You say to him, " Be a hero no more. Henceforth take your ease ; eat, drink and be merry. Be Fortune's darling and a smiling fool." A wise man turns from your offer with loathing.

In easy circumstances man shows only his middling virtues, and often not even these. Both in his mind and in his body he is adapted for big business, for enterprises of great pith and moment, for the acquisition of astonishing arts that seem impossible till he has practised them, for dangerous expeditions into the unknown, for stern and anxious battles with the powers of darkness, for standing up to tremendous shocks, for enduring heartbreaking reverses, for rising up when he has been wounded and beaten to the ground, and for dying, if need be, sword in hand. To a being so splendidly equipped it is no hardship, no cause for whining, when he finds himself " upon an engagement very difficult " : he does not complain of his Maker for that. He praises his Maker, and goes into battle singing psalms.

"Here am I," he cries, "with my aptitudes and versatilities; yonder is the universe offering me the very problems, the very tasks those aptitudes and versatilities are made to cope with; here am I, Lord, send me." To see man as he truly is, to see the greatest virtues of which he is capable, to see the ends for which he was created, we must catch him in one of these moments when he is grappling with problems that seem insoluble, when he is addressing himself to tasks that seem beyond his courage and his wit.

151

Last words

We should have got through but for the sickening of a second companion, and a shortage of fuel for which I cannot account, and the storm which has fallen on us within eleven miles of the depôt at which we hoped to secure our final supplies. Surely misfortune could scarcely have exceeded this last blow.

We arrived within eleven miles of our One Ton Camp with fuel for one last meal and food for two days. For four days we have been unable to leave the tent, the gale howling about us. We are weak, writing is difficult, but for my own sake I do not regret this journey, which has shown that Englishmen can endure hardships, help one another, and meet death with as great a fortitude as ever in the past. We took risks, we knew we took them; things have come out against us, and therefore we have no cause for complaint, but bow to the will of Providence, determined still to do our best to the last. But if we have been willing to give our lives to this enterprise, which is for the honour of our country, I appeal to our countrymen to see that those who depend on us are properly cared for.

Had we lived I should have had a tale to tell of the hardihood, endurance, and courage of my companions which would have stirred the heart of every Englishman.

152

John and Rebecca

THEN I went over to the stone she had pointed to and read the inscription to John Toomer and his wife Rebecca. She died first, in March 1877, aged 72; he in July the same year, aged 75.

"You knew them, I suppose?"

"Yes, they belonged here, both of them."

"Tell me about them."

"There's nothing to tell; he was only a labourer and worked on the same farm all his life."

"Who put a stone over them—their children?"

"No, they're all poor and live away. I think it was a lady who lived here; she'd been good to them, and she came and stood here when they put old John in the ground."

"But I want to hear more."

"There's no more, I've said; he was a labourer, and after she died he died."

"Yes? Go on."

"How can I go on? There's no more. I knew them so well; they lived in the little thatched cottage over there, where the Millards live now."

"Did they fall ill at the same time?"

"Oh no, he was as well as could be, still at work, till she died, then he went on in a strange way. He would come in of an evening and call his wife. 'Mother! Mother! where are you?' you'd hear him call. 'Mother, be you upstairs? Mother, ain't you coming down for a bit of bread and cheese before you go to bed?' And then in a little while he just died."

"And you said there was nothing to tell!"

"No, there wasn't anything. He was just one of us, a labourer on the farm."

153

Spirituality

HE listened gravely to this outburst, and said he didn't know exactly 'bout that, but agreed that it was very quiet on the downs, and that he loved their quiet. "Fifty years," he said, "I've been on the downs and fields, day and night, seven days a week, and I've been told that it's a poor way to spend a life, working seven days for ten or twelve, or at most thirteen shillings. But I never seen it like that; I liked it, and I always did my best. You see, sir, I took a pride in it. I never left a place but I was asked to stay. When I left it was because of something I didn't like. I couldn't never abide cruelty to a dog or any beast. And I couldn't abide bad language. If my master swore at the sheep or the dog

I wouldn't bide with he—no, not for a pound a week. I liked my work, and I liked knowing things about sheep. Not things in books, for I never had no books, but what I found out with my own sense, if you can understand me."

UPWARD

154

Upward

Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his
grasp,
Or what's heaven for?

155

The humble beginning

But men have listened lazily to the words of Christ, as if there were a sweet music in them that could, with its own sweetness, rock them into peace. Or they have made a law of those words, as if by blind obedience to them we could shelter ourselves from all evil; and they have supposed that they could understand His meaning without sharing that experience which gives to His doctrine all its meaning. So actual Christianity has always been infested by the heresy of mere emotion which produces sentimentality; and by the counter-heresy of mere thought, which produces all the lunacies of arid affirmation. Between the Athanasian Creed and talk about the Blood of Jesus, the doctrine of the Kingdom of Heaven has been almost lost. Born with so much passion, with the beautiful life and fearful death of its parents, it has seemed to be almost stillborn. But it remains for us still to bring to life again by our own gradual and difficult harmony of conduct and thought. Of that, if we would call ourselves Christians, we must now make a humble beginning.

156

The Pilgrimage

WHOEVER sets out to follow Christ will have to follow him a long way and to follow him into some dark places. The path we have to follow is a narrow one. It runs all the time on the edge of a precipitous mystery, sometimes taking you up to the sunlit heights and the Mount of Transfiguration, and sometimes taking you down into the fires of suffering and into the shadows of death. Following Christ means that when you find these dizzy things before you, these dark things in your path, you go through them and not round them. Have you a good head? Have you a stout heart? Are you loyal to the leader in front? Easy enough when the road runs by the shining shores of the Lake of Galilee, but not so easy when it turns into the Garden of Gethsemane and becomes the Via Dolorosa.

There are those who think they have followed Christ when they have obeyed the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount, loved their neighbour as themselves and done unto others as they would that others should do to them. To follow as far as that is to go a long way, much longer indeed than most of us can claim to have gone. But to stop there is to stop in the middle, to miss the end of the journey, to come short of the point of arrival, where the key lies to the meaning and value of all that has gone before. We are too apt to rest in the thought that to follow Christ is merely to follow a teacher or a reformer, so that enough has been done when we have repeated his doctrine of Fatherhood and brotherhood, voted for his precepts, and practised as much of them as we can, or perhaps only as much as we find convenient. Let there be no mistake as to the inadequacy of all that, whether presented in a simple form or any other. To follow Christ is to follow a victor in life's battle, a conqueror over suffering and death, through the completeness of his loyalty to the Great Companion.

Hence the power which makes his teaching live; hence the driving force which makes his Gospel effective for the regeneration of society.

157

Love

REAL love is full of understanding—it knows how easy it is to sin, how difficult to live nobly. It does not make quick judgments on spirituality. It sees with the eyes of those it loves. It gets to the heart of a situation as nothing else. It thinks in terms of humanity, and never in terms of "hands" or statistics. It prefers to give itself to the individual; it shuns expression on public platforms. It has no ulterior object except to serve. It would gladly lead if it could—it would never drive. It asks nothing for itself, but it is human enough to long for love in return. It knows when to speak and when to be silent, when to be patient and when to be impatient. It is at home with all sorts and conditions of men and women and children, and it makes them laugh, for it has its own real vein of humour. It gives and gets a joy in loving. It believes in all men and women. There is no such word as hopeless in its vocabulary. It feels ; it is sensitive to the moods of all to whom it is given. It is never clumsy, and yet it often steps in where angels fear to tread. Perhaps its greatest characteristic is its power to understand. It anticipates man's needs ; it can see a situation sometimes before it occurs ; it has an almost superhuman instinct for what ought to be done and how to do it. It knows what is in the heart of man. It is not always declaring itself. Like all creative forces, its best work is done in quietness. It prefers action to speech, it would prefer to visit someone in want to making any oration on fellowship. It likes best to do small things that no one else has seen need doing. It sees sorrow where sorrow is thought to be hidden, and virtue and grandeur where it is least expected. It is for ever on the watch for those who need it. It runs to give itself as the father to the prodigal child, not because he pitied, but because he couldn't do without his son. It washes the disciples' feet as He did because it wants to—not because there is a lesson in humility to be taught. It is like a window through which can be heard all the cries of the market place without. It knows no barrier of rank or class, of creed or colour or race. It overflows the boundary of its own denomination—no official channels can hold it entirely. It flows perhaps most tenderly to those who never enter church, and care little for the love of God. It sees the crown of their need on their foreheads, and longs to be of service.

It learns more in listening than in speech. It is never sarcastic, for it knows that by such means no soul was ever won. It is the property of no clique—it wears no ecclesiastical badge.

It cares nothing for its own status—there is nothing professional about it. It is not always trying to buy up the opportunity, to point the lesson, and draw the moral. Above all, its faith in God is massive. It is confident always that in the end darkness must flee before light. It passes through a world of strife with a strange tranquillity, yet things happen because of it.

This love which comes of God through Jesus Christ is the one weapon we need. Only so can the Kingdom be recognized as a reality.

158

The Host

Love bade me welcome ; yet my soul drew back,
Guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack
From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning
If I lack'd anything.

" A guest," I answered, " worthy to be here."
Love said, " You shall be he."
" I, the unkind, ungrateful ? Ah, my dear,
I cannot look on Thee."
Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
" Who made the eyes but I ? "

" Truth, Lord ; but I have marr'd them : let my shame
Go where it doth deserve."
" And know you not," says Love, " who bore the blame ? "
" My dear, then I will serve."
" You must sit down," says Love, " and taste my meat."
So I did sit and eat.

159

Life satisfying

WHETHER one regards life as a garden or a wilderness, there must be a path if one is to travel any reasonable distance and reach any given goal. One need not be a Christian—I, a Christian, insist upon that freedom—but one must adopt some intelligent, inclusive scheme of life, some religion of completeness, if one is to make life satisfying, or even tolerable. Religion touches upon the future, regards the past, but its main concern is always with to-day ; let me repeat that religion is a way of life, a more perfect way of a richer and more adequate life.

160

Therefore choose life

"THE present crisis in religion," so extensively exploited in these days as though it were a phenomenon peculiar to them, is never " absent " from the pages of the Bible. If we say that religion is the valiant facing of a crisis which has a perennial root in human life, and will never be absent so long as man is man, we shall be defining religion in the Bible spirit. "See," says the Deuteronomist, "I have set before thee this day life and death: therefore choose life, that thou and thy seed may live." "Narrow is the gate and straitened the way," says Jesus, "that leadeth to life, and few there be that find it." "Quit you like men," says St. Paul. The choice between life and death has to be made; it is, under any conceivable circumstances, a hard choice to make. It will be no easier when "the present crisis in religion" has passed away than it is now. Nor will the narrow road that leads to life be any broader, nor the broad road that leads to destruction any narrower, when religion and science have come to terms, than they were before; nor will there be one occasion the less in human experience when "Quit you like men" is the order of the day. Then, as now, the man who would live a good life, or a religious one, will find himself "upon an engagement very difficult." The Bible holds out no prospect whatsoever of a time when religion will have become a walkover, but warns us, in language whose meaning is unmistakable, to gird up our loins for running a race that will challenge our strength to the uttermost. "They that wait on the Lord," says Isaiah, in words that echo the heroic spirit, "shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not faint": or, as Brynhild says to Sigurd, they

> "shall set their throne on high,
> And look on to-day and to-morrow as those that never die."

A difficult position to win: a difficult position to hold.

161

They go not out

RELIGION is worth as much to-day as it was yesterday, and that cannot change, though we do; and if we do we have left God; and whither he can go that goes from God, his own sorrows will soon enough instruct him. This fire must never go out, but it must be like the fire of Heaven; it must shine like the Stars, though sometimes covered with a cloud, or obscured by a greater light; yet they dwell for ever in their orbs, and walk in their circles, and observe their circumstances, but go not out by day nor night, and set not when kings die, nor are extinguished when nations change their government.

162

At Sunday lunch

YES, my friend, it was a bad sermon and that clergyman isn't a clever man, and no doubt you could answer all his arguments; but I pray you desist from criticism and write yourself, not one sermon, but two, for fifty-two Sundays in the year, and remember they must be delivered to folk like yourself. Then start away again to criticise the clergyman if you like and if you can.

163

Little stars

IN that glistening circle in the firmament, which we call the Galaxie, the milkie-way, there is not one starre of any of the six great magnitudes, which Astronomers proceed upon, belonging to that circle: it is a glorious circle, and possesseth a great part of heaven, and yet is all of so little starres, as have no name, no knowledge taken of them: So certainly there are many Saints in heaven, that shine as starres, and yet are not of those great magnitudes, to have been Patriarchs, or Prophets, or Apostles, or Martyrs, or Doctours, or Virgins; but good and blessed souls, that have religiously performed the duties of inferior callings, and no more.

164

Quit you like men

I CONFESS that I do not see why the very existence of an invisible world may not in part depend on the personal response which any one of us may make to the religious appeal. God himself, in short, may draw vital strength and increase of being from our fidelity. For my own part, I do not know what the sweat and blood and tragedy of this life mean, if they mean anything short of this. If this life be not a real fight, in which something is eternally gained for the universe by success, it is no better than a game of private theatricals from which one may withdraw at will. But it feels like a real fight,—as if there were something really wild in the universe which we, with all our idealities and faithfulnesses, are needed to redeem ; and first of all to redeem our own hearts from atheisms and fears.

For such a half-wild, half-saved universe our nature is adapted. The deepest thing in our nature is this Binnenleben (as a German doctor lately has called it), this dumb region of the heart in which we dwell alone with our willingnesses, our faiths and fears. As through the cracks and crannies of caverns those waters exude from the earth's bosom which then form the fountain heads of springs, so in these crepuscular depths of personality the sources of all our outer deeds and decisions take their rise. Here is our deepest organ of communication with the nature of things ; and compared with these concrete movements of our soul all abstract statements and scientific arguments—the veto, for example, which the strict positivist pronounces upon our faith—sound to us like the mere chatterings of the teeth. For here possibilities, not finished facts, are the realities with which we have actively to deal ; and to quote my friend, William Salter of the Philadelphia Ethical Society, " as the essence of courage is to stake one's life on a possibility, so the essence of faith is to believe that that possibility exists."

These, then, are my last words to you: be not afraid of life. Believe that life *is* worth living, and your belief will help create the fact. The "scientific proof" that you are right may not be clear before the day of judgment (or some state of being which that expression may serve to symbolize) is reached. But the faithful fighters of this hour, or the beings that then and there will represent them, may then turn to the faint-hearted, who here decline to go on, with words like those with which Henry IV greeted the tardy Crillon after a great victory had been gained: "Hang yourself, brave Crillon! We fought at Arques, and you were not there."

165

The naughty Bishop

It is strange what little things will choke a youngster off religion. As an undergraduate I lost for a time what little faith I had because I saw a Bishop unable to take a beating at tennis like a gentleman. A poor faith mine, you say. Yes, undoubtedly, but if Christianity does not prevent one of its leading exponents from behaving like a cad when he loses a game, it is a bad look out for the rest of us.

166

Our Living Bond

Of the pride of Satan what I think is this: it is hard for us on earth to comprehend it, and therefore it is so easy to fall into error and to share it, even imagining that we are doing something grand and fine. Indeed many of the strongest feelings and movements of our nature we cannot comprehend on earth. Let not that be a stumbling-block, and think not that it may serve as a justification to you for anything. For the Eternal Judge asks of you what you can comprehend and not what you cannot. You will know that yourself hereafter, for you will behold all things truly then and will not dispute them. On earth, indeed, we are as it were astray, and if it were not for the precious image of Christ before us, we should be undone and altogether lost, as was the human race before the flood. Much on earth is hidden from us, but to make up for that we have been given a precious mystic sense of our living bond with the other world, with the higher heavenly world, and the roots of our thoughts and feelings are not here but in other worlds. That is why the philosophers say that we cannot apprehend the reality of things on earth.

God took seeds from different worlds and sowed them on this earth, and His garden grew up and everything came up that could come up, but what grows lives and is alive only through the feeling of its contact with other mysterious worlds. If that feeling grows weak or is destroyed in you, the heavenly growth will die away in you. Then you will be indifferent to life and even grow to hate it. That's what I think.

167

Starboard of woe

But oh ! shipmates ! on the starboard hand of every woe, there is a sure delight ; and the higher the top of that delight, than the bottom of the woe is deep. Is not the main truck higher than the kelson is low ? Delight is to him—a far, far upward, and inward delight

—who against the proud gods and commodores of this earth, ever stands forth his own inexorable self. Delight is to him whose strong arms yet support him, when the ship of this base treacherous world has gone down beneath him. Delight is to him, who gives no quarter in the truth, and kills, burns, and destroys all sin though he pluck it out from under the robes of Senators and Judges. Delight,—top-gallant delight is to him, who acknowledges no law or lord, but the Lord his God, and is only a patriot to heaven.

168

She is likely to win

There comes a time in your life, when you play as it were a game of cards against Faith. It is the oldest of all games. You and she, across the green table of Earth, are confronted ; and the rule is, that you play first. You sit and stare, across the table, at the backs of her cards. You have a strong hand : you hold the cruelty of Nature, and the iniquities of Man : the facts of drink, insanity, inherited disease : the misery of the unemployed. What a hand you have got, what a hand ! Come, you begin. Those eighteen, on whom the tower of Siloam fell, and slew them—try that card. The game sways now to you, now to her, till the fan of your hand is thinned. You will find that she, no less than you, has a strong hand, stronger than you thought: and, if you live long enough, she is likely to win. For she holds, with much else that is worth having, certain cards which you will never beat: and she is an old and skilful player. Be careful to keep your temper over the game: and, of course, you play not for money but for Love.

169

The fact of Christ

WHATEVER else may be taken away from us by rational criticism, Christ is still left; a unique figure, not more unlike all His precursors than all His followers, even those who had the direct benefit of His teaching. It is of no use to say that Christ as exhibited in the Gospels is not historical, and that we know not how much of what is admirable has been superadded by the tradition of His followers. The tradition of followers suffices to insert any number of marvels, and may have inserted all the miracles which He is reputed to have wrought. But who among His followers, or among their proselytes, was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus, or of imaging the life and character revealed in the Gospels? Certainly not the fishermen of Galilee: as certainly not St. Paul, whose character and idiosyncrasies were of a totally different sort: still less the early Christian writers, in whom nothing is more evident than that the good which was in them was all derived, as they always professed that it was derived, from the higher source.

170

Willing surrender

MAN is only in a true state of health or salvation when he knows that all his being and knowledge are derived from and dependent upon One who is infinitely different from and greater than himself. Just as true happiness can only be won by subordinating all happiness to an end of a quite different nature, so true manhood can only be realised by subordinating all manhood to a Being and a Will which are infinitely other than human. The question is not one of theory only. For modern men and women persist not only in thinking, but in behaving, as though man's destiny, in so far as it can be rationally ordered, were entirely dependent upon himself.

171

The privileged sacrifice

For my own part, I have never ceased to rejoice that God has appointed me to such an office. People talk of the sacrifice I have made in spending so much of my life in Africa. Can that be called a sacrifice which is simply paid back as a small part of a great debt owing to our God, which we can never repay? Is that a sacrifice which brings its own blest reward in healthful activity, the consciousness of doing good, peace of mind, and a bright hope of a glorious destiny hereafter? Away with the word in such a view, and with such a thought! It is emphatically no sacrifice. Say rather it is a privilege. Anxiety, sickness, suffering, or danger, now and then, with a foregoing of the common conveniences and charities of this life, may make us pause, and cause the spirit to waver, and the soul to sink ; but let this be only for a moment. All these are nothing when compared with the glory which shall hereafter be revealed in, and for, us. I never made a sacrifice. Of this we ought not to talk, when we remember the great sacrifice which He made who left His Father's throne on high to give Himself for us ; "who being the brightness of that Father's glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

172

Give it a chance

MEN may settle small things for themselves—as what they will have for dinner or where they will spend the vacation—but the great ones—such as the choice of a profession, of the part of England they will live in, whether they will marry or no—they had better leave the force of circumstances to settle for them ; if they prefer the phraseology, as I do myself, let them leave these matters to God. When He has arranged things for them, do not let them be in too great a hurry to upset His arrangement in a tiff. If they do not like their present profession and another opening suggests itself easily and naturally, let them take that as a sign that they may change; otherwise, let them see to it that they do not leave the frying-pan for the fire. A man, finding himself in the field of a profession, should do as cows do when they are put into a field of grass. They do not like any field; they like the open prairie of their ancestors. They walk, however, all round their new abode, surveying the hedges and gates with much interest. If there is a gap in any hedge they will commonly go through it at once, otherwise they will resign themselves contentedly enough to the task of feeding.

173

Happiness

THE Stoics say "Seek within yourself, for there you shall find rest"—but they are wrong. The Hedonists say "Seek pleasures outside yourself, in amusement"—but they are wrong. That way comes illness. Happiness is not in man, or outside him, but in God, and the wise man seeks his happiness where he knows it may be found.

174

Read thou the earth

SINCE the Stars of Heaven do differ in Glory ; since it hath pleased the Almighty hand to honour the North Pole with Lights above the South ; since there are some stars so bright, that they can hardly be looked on, some so dim that they can scarce be seen, and vast numbers not to be seen at all by Artificial Eyes ; read thou the Earth in Heaven, and things below from above. Look contentedly upon the scattered difference of things, and expect not equality in lustre, dignity, or perfection, in Regions or Persons below ; where numerous numbers must be content to stand like lacteous or nebulous Stars, little taken notice of, or dim in their generations. All which may be contentedly allowable in the affairs and ends of this World, and in suspension unto what will be in the order of things hereafter, and the new Systeme of Mankind which will be in the World to come ;

when the last may be the first and the first the last; when Lazarus may sit above Caesar, and the just obscure on Earth shall shine like the Sun in Heaven; when personations shall cease, and Histrionism of happiness be over; when Reality shall rule, and all shall be as they shall be for ever.

175

Simply because—

I WAS very sorry to hear of your poor boy's disappointment anent the fossils. But, alas, if the dear child is to break his heart every time he finds that what he has cherished, or, maybe, as his own offspring, is treated with neglect, where will he be when he is 52, the present writer's age? Life is one long series of such checks. For example, I try here to keep a spring clean. The very people who use it, in fact the only people who use it, are the people who choke it up with old boots, Australian meat cans and worse filth. But I keep it clean nevertheless, simply because there is such a thing as duty which exists and is imperative, apart from all other motives. It is a divine acquisition when a man has learned that, whether people reward him or not, he ought to walk the straight path—in the light, as Carlyle would say, of the Eternities—not of a never-ending future, but of that Eternal truth which is the veritable I AM.

176

Under a Wiltshire apple tree

SOME folk as can afford,
So I've heard say,
Set up a sort of cross
Right in the garden way
To mind 'em of the Lord.

But I, when I do see
Thik apple tree
An' stoopin' limb
All spread wi' moss,
I think of Him
And how He talks wi' me.

I think of God
And how He trod
That garden long ago ;
He walked, I reckon, to and fro
And then sat down
Upon the groun'

Or some low limb
What suited Him,
Such as you see
On many a tree,
And on thik very one
Where I at set o' sun
Do sit and talk wi' He.

And, mornings too, I rise and come
An' sit down where the branch be low ;
A bird do sing, a bee do hum,
The flowers in the border blow,
And all my heart's so glad and clear
As pools when mists do disappear :
As pools a-laughing in the light
When mornin' air is swep' an' bright,
As pools what got Heaven in sight
So's my heart's cheer
When He be near.

He never pushed the garden door,
He left no footmark on the floor ;
I never heard 'Un stir nor tread
And yet His Hand do bless my head,
And when 'tis time for work to start
I takes Him with me in my heart.

And when I die, pray God I see
At very last thik apple tree
An' stoopin' limb,
And think of Him
And all He been to me.

177

In church this morning

I THINK St. Francis would have been happy in Church this morning. At the Holy Communion, a dog walked up the aisle into the Sanctuary, and just when I trembled lest the Celebrant should call the Verger to expel it while the congregation giggled, he did the lovely and obvious thing. He came down from the Altar, patted the dog, and made it lie down within the Altar rails, and the congregation smiled contentedly and went on with its prayers.

THE WIND BLOWETH

178

The silent rhythm

YET, when the city sleeps,
When all the cries are still,
The stars and heavenly deeps
Work out a perfect will.

179

The Holy Grail

ABOVE the indistinguishable roar of the many feet I feel the presence of the sun, of the immense forces of the universe, and beyond these the sense of the eternal now, of the immortal. Full aware that all has failed, yet, side by side with the sadness of that knowledge, there lives on in me an unquenchable belief, thought burning like the sun, that there is yet something to be found, something real, something to give each separate personality sunshine and flowers in its own existence now. Something to shape this million-handed labour to an end and outcome, leaving accumulated sunshine and flowers to those who shall succeed. It must be dragged forth by might of thought from the immense forces of the universe.

180

The seekers

FRIENDS and loves we have none, nor wealth nor blessed abode,
But the hope of the City of God at the other end of the road.

Not for us are content, and quiet, and peace of mind,
For we go seeking a city that we shall never find.

There is no solace on earth for us—for such as we—
Who search for a hidden city that we shall never see.

Only the road and the dawn, the sun, the wind, and the rain,
And the watch fire under stars, and sleep, and the road again.

We seek the City of God, and the haunt where beauty dwells,
And we find the noisy mart and the sound of burial bells.

Never the golden city, where radiant people
    meet,
But the dolorous town where mourners are
    going about the street.

We travel the dusty road till the light of the
    day is dim,
And sunset shows us spires away on the world's
    rim.

We travel from dawn to dusk, till the day is
    past and by,
Seeking the Holy City beyond the rim of the
    sky.

Friends and loves we have none, nor wealth
    nor blessed abode,
But the hope of the City of God at the other end
    of the road.

181

Three cheers

METHINKS we have hugely mistaken this matter of life and death. Methinks that what they call my shadow here on earth is my true substance. Methinks that in looking at things spiritual we are too much like oysters observing the sun through water, and thinking that thick water the thinnest of air. Methinks my body is but the lees of my being. In fact, take my body who will, take it, I say, it is not me. And therefore three cheers for Nantucket; and come a stove boat and stove body when they will, for stove my soul, Jove himself cannot!

182

Here or nowhere

MAY we not say, however, that the hour of Spiritual Enfranchisement is even this: When your Ideal World, wherein the whole man has been dimly struggling and inexpressibly languishing to work, becomes revealed, and thrown open; and you discover, with amazement enough, like the Lothario in *Wilhelm Meister*, that your "America is here or nowhere"? The Situation that has not its Duty, its Ideal, was never yet occupied by man. Yes here, in this poor, miserable, hampered, despicable Actual, wherein thou even now standest, here or nowhere is thy Ideal: work it out therefrom; and working, believe, live, be free. Fool! the Ideal is in thyself, the impediment too is in thyself: thy Condition is but the stuff thou art to shape that same Ideal out of: what matters whether such stuff be of this sort or that, so the Form thou give it be heroic, be poetic? O thou that pinest in the imprisonment of the Actual, and criest bitterly to the gods for a kingdom wherein to rule and create, know this of a truth: the thing thou seekest is already with thee, "here or nowhere," couldst thou only see! . . . I too could now say to myself: Be no longer a Chaos, but a World, or even Worldkin. Produce! Produce! Were it but the pitifullest infinitesimal fraction of a Product, produce it, in God's name! 'Tis the utmost thou hast in thee: out with it, then. Up, up! Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy whole might. Work while it is called To-day; for the Night cometh, wherein no man can work.

183

Clipped wings

JOAN. Yes: they told me you were fools and that I was not to listen to your fine words nor trust to your charity. You promised me my life; but you lied. You think that life is nothing but being stone dead. It is not the bread and water I fear ; I can live on bread ; when have I asked for more ? It is no hardship to drink water if the water be clean. Bread has no sorrow for me, and water no affliction. But to shut me from the light of the sky and the sight of the fields and flowers ; to chain my feet so that I can never ride with the soldiers nor climb the hills ; to make me breathe foul damp darkness, and keep me from everything that brings me back to the love of God when your wickedness and foolishness tempt me to hate Him : all this is worse than the furnace in the Bible that was heated seven times. I could do without my war-horse ; I could drag about in a skirt ; I could let the banners and trumpets and the knights and the soldiers pass me and leave me behind as they leave the other women, if only I could still hear the wind in the trees, the larks in the sunshine, the young lambs crying through the healthy frost, and the blessed blessed church bells that send my angel voices floating to me on the wind. But without these things I cannot live ; and by your wanting to take them away from me, or from any human creature, I know that your counsel is of the devil, and that mine is of God.

184

The loneliness of God

JOAN. Where would you all have been now if I had heeded that sort of truth? There is no help, no counsel, in any of you. Yes: I am alone on earth: I have always been alone. My father told my brothers to drown me if I would not stay to mind his sheep while France was bleeding to death: France might perish if only our lambs were safe. I thought France would have friends at the court of the king of France; and I find only wolves fighting for pieces of her poor torn body. I thought God would have friends everywhere, because He is the friend of everyone; and in my innocence I believed that you who now cast me out would be like strong towers to keep harm from me. But I am wiser now; and nobody is any the worse for being wiser. Do not think you can frighten me by telling me that I am alone. France is alone; and God is alone; and, what is my loneliness before the loneliness of my country and my God? I see now that the loneliness of God is His strength: what would He be if He listened to your jealous little counsels? Well, my loneliness shall be my strength too: it is better to be alone with God: His friendship will not fail me, nor His counsel, nor His love. In His strength I will dare, and dare, and dare, until I die. I will go out now to the common people, and let the love in their eyes comfort me for the hate in yours. You will all be glad to see me burnt; but if I go through the fire I shall go through it to their hearts for ever and ever. And so, God be with me!

185

'*O World, thou choosest not*'

O World, thou choosest not the better part!
It is not wisdom to be only wise,
And on the inward vision close the eyes,
But it is wisdom to believe the heart.
Columbus found a world, and had no chart,
Save one that faith deciphered in the skies;
To trust the soul's invincible surmise
Was all his science and his only art.

Our knowledge is a torch of smoky pine
That lights the pathway but one step ahead
Across a void of mystery and dread.
Bid, then, the tender light of faith to shine
By which alone the mortal heart is led
Unto the thinking of the thought divine.

186

Truly grateful

BY the very right of your senses you enjoy the World. Is not the beauty of the Hemisphere present to your eye? Doth not the glory of the Sun pay tribute to your sight? Is not the vision of the World an amiable thing? Do not the stars shed influences to perfect the Air? Is not that a marvellous body to breathe in? To visit the lungs: repair the spirits, revive the senses, cool the blood, fill the empty spaces between the Earth and Heavens; and yet give liberty to all objects? Prize these first: and you shall enjoy the residue: Glory, Dominion, Power, Wisdom, Honour, Angels, Souls, Kingdoms, Ages. Be faithful in a little, and you shall be master over much. If you be not faithful in esteeming these, who shall put into your hands the true Treasures? If you be negligent in prizing these, you will be negligent in prizing all. For there is a disease in him who despiseth present mercies, which till it be cured, he can never be happy. He esteemeth nothing that he hath, but is ever gaping after more: which when he hath he despiseth in like manner. Insatiableness is good, but not ingratitude.

187

Clothed with the heavens

You never enjoy the world aright, till the Sea itself floweth in your veins, till you are clothed with the heavens, and crowned with the stars: and perceive yourself to be the sole heir of the whole world, and more than so, because men are in it who are every one sole heirs as well as you. Till you can sing and rejoice and delight in God, as misers do in gold, and Kings in sceptres, you never enjoy the world.

Till your spirit filleth the whole world, and the stars are your jewels; till you are as familiar with the ways of God in all Ages as with your walk and table: till you are intimately acquainted with that shady nothing out of which the world was made: till you love men so as to desire their happiness, with a thirst equal to the zeal of your own; till you delight in God for being good to all: you never enjoy the world. Till you more feel it than your private estate, and are more present in the hemisphere, considering the glories and the beauties there, than in your own house: Till you remember how lately you were made, and how wonderful it was when you came into it: and more rejoice in the palace of your glory, than if it had been made but to-day morning.

188

Man of the world

THE man who cannot wonder, who does not habitually wonder (and worship), were he President of innumerable Royal Societies, and carried the whole *Mécanique Céleste* and *Hegel's Philosophy*, and the epitome of all Laboratories and Observatories with their results, in his single head,—is but a Pair of Spectacles behind which there is no Eye. Let those who have Eyes look through him, then he may be useful.

Thou wilt have no Mystery and Mysticism ; wilt walk through thy world by the sunshine of what thou callest Truth, or even by the hand-lamp of what I call Attorney-Logic ; and " explain " all, " account " for all, or believe nothing of it ? Nay, thou wilt attempt laughter ; whoso recognizes the unfathomable, all-pervading domain of Mystery, which is everywhere under our feet and among our hands ; to whom the Universe is an Oracle and Temple, as well as a Kitchen and Cattle-stall,—he shall be a delirious Mystic ; to him thou, with sniffing charity, wilt protrusively proffer thy Hand-lamp, and shriek, as one injured, when he kicks his foot through it ?—*Armer Teufel !* Doth not thy cow calve, doth not thy bull gender ? Thou thyself, wert thou not Born, wilt thou not Die ? " Explain " me all this, or do one of two things : Retire into private places with thy foolish cackle ; or, what were better, give it up, and weep, not that the reign of wonder is done, and God's world all disembellished and prosaic, but that thou hitherto art a Dilletante and sandblind Pedant.

189

Your familiar treasures

YOU never know yourself till you know more than your body. The Image of God was not seated in the features of your face, but in the lineaments of your Soul. In the knowledge of your Powers, Inclinations, and Principles, the knowledge of yourself chiefly consisteth. Which are so great that even to the most learned of men, their Greatness is Incredible ; and so Divine, that they are infinite in value. Alas, the WORLD is but a little centre in comparison of you. Suppose it millions of miles from the Earth to the Heavens, and millions of miles above the Stars, both here and over the heads of our Antipodes : it is surrounded with infinite and eternal space : And like a gentleman's house to one that is travelling ; it is a long time before you come unto it, you pass it in an instant, and leave it for ever. The Omnipresence and Eternity of God are your fellows and companions. And all that is in them ought to be made your familiar Treasures. Your understanding comprehends the World like the dust of a balance, measures Heaven with a span, and esteems a thousand years but as one day. So that Great, Endless, Eternal Delights are only fit to be its enjoyments.

190

Above the sun

Now for my life, it is a miracle of thirty years, which to relate were not a history, but a piece of poetry, and would sound to common ears like a fable; for the world, I count it not an Inn, but an Hospital; and a place not to live, but to die in. The world that I regard is myself; it is the microcosm of my own frame that I cast mine eye on: for the other, I use it but like my Globe, and turn it round sometimes for my recreation. Men that look upon my outside, perusing only my condition and fortunes, do err in my Altitude. For I am above Atlas his shoulders. The earth is a point, not only in respect of the Heavens above us, but of that Heavenly and Celestial part within us: that mass of flesh that circumscribes me, limits not my mind; that surface that tells the Heavens it hath an end, cannot persuade me I have any ; I take my circle to be above three hundred and sixty ; though the number of the arc do measure my body, it comprehendeth not my mind ; whilst I study to find how I am a Microcosm or little world, I find myself something more than the great. There is surely a piece of Divinity in us ; something that was before the elements, and owes no homage unto the Sun.

191

Looking up

Would one think it possible for a man to delight in gauderies like a butterfly, and neglect the Heavens ? Did we not daily see it, it would be incredible. They rejoice in a piece of gold more than the Sun ; and get a few little glittering stones and call them jewels. And admire them because they be resplendent like the stars, and transparent like the air, and pellucid like the sea. But the stars themselves which are ten thousand times more useful, great, and glorious they disregard. Nor shall the air itself be counted anything, though it be worth all the pearls and diamonds in ten thousand worlds. A work of God so Divine by reason of its precious and pure transparency, that all worlds would be worth nothing without such a treasure.

192

Possessing all things

WHEN things are ours in their proper places, nothing is needful but prizing to enjoy them. God therefore hath made it infinitely easy to enjoy, by making everything ours, and us able so easily to prize them. Everything is ours that serves us in its place. The Sun serves us as much as is possible, and more than we could imagine. The Clouds and Stars minister unto us, the World surrounds us with beauty, the Air refresheth us, the Sea revives the earth and us. The Earth itself is better than gold because it produceth fruits and flowers. And therefore in the beginning was it made manifest to be mine, because Adam alone was made to enjoy it. By making one, and not a multitude, God evidently showed one alone to be the end of the World and everyone its enjoyer.

193

The Pulley

WHEN God at first made man,
Having a glass of blessings standing by—
Let us (said He) pour on him all we can ;
Let the world's riches, which dispersèd lie,
Contract into a span.

So strength first made a way,
Then beauty flow'd, then wisdom, honour, pleasure :
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that, alone of all His treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay.

For if I should (said He)
Bestow this jewel also on My creature,
He would adore My gifts instead of Me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature :
So both should losers be.

Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness ;
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to My breast.

194

Nothing is cast aside

DETACHED, separated! I say there is no such separation: nothing hitherto was ever stranded, cast aside; but all, were it only a withered leaf, works together with all; is borne forward on the bottomless, shoreless flood of Action, and lives through perpetual metamorphoses. The withered leaf is not dead and lost, there are forces in it and around it, though working in inverse order; else how could it *rot*? Despise not the rag from which man makes Paper, or the litter from which the earth makes Corn. Rightly viewed no meanest object is insignificant; all objects are as windows, through which the philosophic eye looks into Infinitude itself.

195

Taking your bearings

GIVE up your own idea of what is good and you are lost in a universal scepticism. The answer of the doctrine of the Kingdom of Heaven is that good is not merely an idea but a fact, and that our task is, not to think about it within the prison of our own minds, but to see it and achieve it. We do not exist to form things into conformity with it, if we can; or to wail or commit suicide if we cannot. We have a faint perception of good to begin with, because good is a fact, because the Kingdom of Heaven is a fact, that would exist if we were not; and our task is to see this fact more and more clearly, and to become ourselves more and more part of it. This scepticism about good, like other kinds of scepticism, *solvitur ambulando*; only you must walk in the right direction, that is to say, towards the Kingdom of Heaven; and you can do that because the Kingdom of Heaven is there for you to see, the more clearly, the more you advance towards it. As you advance your own concept of good will become clearer and richer, because it will be a concept of a reality that you know more and more surely to be a reality. Being yourself more and more closely related to that reality, you will be freed from the notion that your concepts are utterly the products of your own mind; you will have a growing faith in them, because you see them growing within you through your own vision of the truth.

196

A larger life

HERE is our little planet, chiefly occupied, to our view, in rushing round the sun; but perhaps found from another angle to fill quite another part in the cosmic scheme. And on this apparently unimportant speck, wandering among systems of suns, the appearance of life and its slow development and ever-increasing sensitization; the emerging of pain and of pleasure; and presently man with his growing capacity for self-affirmation and self-sacrifice, for rapture and for grief. Love with its unearthly happiness, unmeasured devotion, and limitless pain; all the ecstasy, all the anguish that we extract from the rhythm of life and death. It is much, really, for one little planet to bring to birth. And presently another music, which some—not many perhaps yet, in comparison with its population—are able to hear. The music of a more inward life, a sort of figure in which the eternal and temporal are mingled; and here and there some, already, who respond to it. Those who hear it would not all agree as to the nature of the melody;

but all would agree that it is something different in kind from the rhythm of life and death. And in their surrender to this—to which, as they feel sure, the physical order too is really keeping time—they taste a larger life ; more universal, more divine. As Plotinus said, they are looking at the Conductor in the midst ; and, keeping time with Him, find the fulfilment both of their striving and of their peace.

197

The one Spirit

AND note that, working on this basis, we need not in order to find room for the facts commit ourselves to the harsh dualism, the opposition between nature and spirit, which is characteristic of some earlier forms of Christian thought. In this dualism, too, we find simply an effort to describe felt experience. It is an expression of the fact, so strongly and deeply felt by the richest natures, that there is an utter difference in kind between the natural life of use and wont, as most of us live it, and the life that is dominated by the spiritual consciousness. The change is indeed so great, the transfiguration so complete, that they seize on the strongest language in which to state it. And in the good old human way, referring their own feelings to the universe, they speak of the opposing and incompatible worlds of matter and of spirit, of nature and of grace. But those who have most deeply reflected, have perceived that the change effected is not a change of worlds. It is rather such a change of temper and attitude as will disclose within our one world, here and now, the one Spirit in the diversity of His gifts ; the one Love, in homeliest incidents as well as noblest vision, laying its obligations on the soul ; and so the true nature and full possibilities of this our present life.

198

La vie profonde

HEMMED in by petty thoughts and petty things,
Intent on toys and trifles all my years,
Pleased by life's gauds, pained by its pricks and stings,
Swayed by ignoble hopes, ignoble fears ;

Threading life's tangled maze without life's clue,
Busy with means, yet heedless of their ends,
Lost to all sense of what is real and true,
Blind to the goal to which all Nature tends :—
Such is my surface self : but deep beneath,
A mighty actor on a world-wide stage,
Crowned with all knowledge, lord of life and
 death,
Sure of my aim, sure of my heritage,—
I—the true self—live on, in self's despite.
That " life profound " whose darkness is God's
 light.

199

The gentle heat

If there be a common nature that unites and tyes the scattered and divided individuals into one species, why may there not be one that unites them all ? However, I am sure there is a common Spirit that plays within us, yet makes no part of us ; and that is, the Spirit of God, the fire and scintillation of that noble and mighty Essence, which is the life and radical heat of Spirits, and those essences that know not the vertue of the Sun ; a fire quite contrary to the fire of Hell. This is that gentle heat that brooded on the waters, and in six days hatched the World ; this is that irradiation that dispels the mists of Hell, the clouds of horrour, fear, sorrow, despair ; and preserves the region of the mind in serenity. Whosoever feels not the warm gale and gentle ventilation of this Spirit, though I feel his pulse, I dare not say he lives : for truely, without this, to me there is no heat under the Tropick ; nor any light, though I dwelt in the body of the Sun.

200

Uxbridge Road

THE Western Road goes streaming out to seek the cleanly wild,
It pours the city's dim desires towards the undefiled,
It sweeps betwixt the huddled homes about its eddies grown
To smear the little space between the city and the sown :
The torments of that seething tide who is there that can see ?
There's one who walked with starry feet the western road by me.

He is the Drover of the soul ; he leads the flock of men
All wistful on that weary track, and brings them back again.
The dreaming few, the slaving crew, the motley caste of life—
The wastrel and artificer, the harlot and the wife—
They may not rest, for ever pressed by one they cannot see :
The one who walked with starry feet the western road by me.

He drives them east, he drives them west, between the dark and light ;
He pastures them in city pens, he leads them home at night.
The towery trams, the threaded trains, like shuttles to and fro
To weave the web of working days in ceaseless travel go.
How harsh the woof, how long the weft ! who shall the fabric see ?
The one who walked with starry feet the western road by me.

Throughout the living joyful year at lifeless tasks to strive,
And scarcely at the end to save gentility alive;
The villa plot to sow and reap, to act the villa lie,
Beset by villa fears to live, midst villa dreams to die;
Ah, who can know the dreary woe? and who the splendour see?
The one who walked with starry feet the western road by me.

Behold! he lent me as we went the vision of the seer;
Behold! I saw the life of men, the life of God shine clear.
I saw the hidden Spirit's thrust; I saw the race fulfil
The spiral of its steep ascent, predestined of the Will.
Yet not unled, but shepherded by one they may not see—
The one who walked with starry feet the western road by me.

201

O lovely lily

How swift the summer goes,
Forget-me-not, pink, rose.
The young grass when I started,
And now the hay is carted,
And now my song is ended,
And all the summer spended ;
The blackbird's second brood
Routs beech-leaves in the wood,
The pink and rose have speeded,
Forget-me-not has seeded.
Only the winds that blew,
The rain that makes things new,
The earth that hides things old,
And blessings manifold.

O lovely lily clean,
O lily springing green,
O lily bursting white,
Dear lily of delight,
Spring in my heart agen
That I may flower to men.

MY COUNTRY

202

Milton

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green?
And was the Holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the countenance divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among these dark satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold!
Bring me my arrows of desire!
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!
Bring me my chariot of fire!

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

203

Our destinies

We want a "Wake up, England!" movement in Great Britain, and not merely in Great Britain, but for all the English throughout the world. We want a mood and form of politics that will save our destinies from our politicians while there are still great things to be saved.

204

Dedication

BUT, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honoured dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

205

A prayer to England

All that a man might ask thou hast given me, England,
Birthright and happy childhood's long heartease,
And love whose range is deep beyond all sounding,
And wider than all seas :

A heart to front the world and find God in it,
Eyes blind enow, but not too blind to see
The lovely things behind the dross and darkness,
And lovelier things to be ;

And friends whose loyalty time nor death shall weaken,
And quenchless hope and laughter's golden store—
All that a man might ask thou hast given me, England,
Yet grant thou one thing more ;

That now when envious foes would spoil thy splendour,
Unversed in arms, a dreamer such as I
May in thy ranks be deemed not all unworthy,
England, for thee to die.

206

Afoot in England

I WAS staying with the companion of my walks at a village in southern England in a district new to us. We arrived on a Saturday, and next morning after breakfast went out for a long walk. Turning into the first path across the fields on leaving the village, we came eventually to an oak wood, which was like an open forest, very wild and solitary. In half an hour's walk among the old oaks and underwood we saw no sign of human occupancy, and heard nothing but the woodland birds. We heard, and then saw, the cuckoo for the first time that season, though it was but April the fourth. But the cuckoo was early that spring and had been heard by some from the middle of March. At length, about half-past ten o'clock, we caught sight of a number of people walking in a kind of straggling procession by a path which crossed ours at right angles, headed by a stout old man in a black smock frock and brown leggings, who carried a big book in one hand. One of the processionists we spoke to told us they came from a hamlet a mile away on the borders of the wood, and were on their way to church. We elected to follow them, thinking that the church was at some neighbouring village ; to our surprise we found it was in the wood, with no other building in sight—a small ancient-looking church built on a raised mound, surrounded by a wide shallow grass-grown trench, on the border of a marshy stream. The people went in and took their seats, while we remained standing just by the door. Then the priest came from the vestry, and seizing the rope vigorously, pulled at it for five minutes, after which he showed us where to sit and the service began. It was very pleasant there with the door open to the sunlit forest, and the little green churchyard without, with a willow wren, the first I had heard, singing his delicate little strain at intervals.

207

On England

THEY have given us into the hands of the new unhappy lords,
Lords without anger and honour, who dare not carry their swords.

They fight by shuffling papers; they have bright dead alien eyes;
They look at our labour and laughter as a tired man looks at flies.
And the load of their loveless pity is worse than ancient wrongs,
Their doors are shut in the evening; and they know no songs.

We hear men speaking for us of new laws strong and sweet,
Yet is there no man speaketh as we speak in the street.
It may be we shall rise the last as Frenchmen rose the first,
Our wrath come after Russia's wrath and our wrath be the worst.
It may be we are meant to mark with our riot and our rest
God's scorn for all men governing. It may be beer is best.
But we are the people of England; and we have not spoken yet.
Smile at us, pay us, pass us. But do not quite forget.

208

June 1919

I KNOW now I never realised the War was over until I sat on a June day in the Pavilion at Lord's, and heard all the old familiar sounds again—the bell ringing for the leisurely umpires in their white coats to move out to the wicket ; the sound of eleven young men with nailed boots clattering down the Pavilion steps to take the field, and the voices of gallant old gentlemen, most of them ennobled by the loss of at least one son, talking the old stuff—for once so welcome—about how cricket wasn't played now as it was in their young days.

209

The Hambledon Men

I

ONE of our matches having been concluded early in the day, a long, rawboned devil of a countryman came up, and offered to play any one of the twenty-two at single wicket for five pounds. Old Nyren told Lumpy it would be five pounds easily earned, and persuaded him to accept the challenge. Lumpy, however, would not stake the whole sum himself, but offered a pound of the money, and the rest was subscribed. The confident old bowler made the countryman go in first, for he thought to settle his business in a twink ; but the fellow, having an arm as long as a hop-pole, reached in at Lumpy's balls, bowl what length he might ; and slashed and thrashed away in the most ludicrous style, hitting his balls all over the field, and always up in the air ; and he made an uncommon number of runs from this prince of bowlers before he could get him out ; —and, egad ! he beat him ! for when Lumpy went in, not being a good batter, all along the ground, and straight to the wicket, he knocked him out presently : the whole ring roaring with laughter, and the astounded old bowler swearing he would never play another single match as long as he lived—an oath, I am sure, he religiously observed, for he was confoundedly crestfallen. Lumpy was a short man, round-shouldered and stout. He had no trick about him, but was as plain as a pike-staff in all his dealings.

2

There was high feasting on Broad-Halfpenny during the solemnity of one of our grand matches. Oh! it was a heart-stirring sight to witness the multitude forming a complete and dense circle round that noble green. Half the county would be present, and all their hearts with us. Little Hambledon pitted against All England was a proud thought for the Hampshire men. Defeat was glory in such a struggle—Victory, indeed, made us only "a little lower than angels." How those fine brawn-faced fellows of farmers would drink to our success! And then, what stuff they had to drink! Punch!—not your new Ponche à la Romaine, or Ponche à la Groseille, or your modern cat-lap milk punch—punch be-deviled; but good, unsophisticated John Bull stuff—stark!—that would stand on end—punch that would make a cat speak! Sixpence a bottle! We had not sixty millions of interest to pay in those days. The ale too!—not the modern horror under the same name, that drives as many men melancholy-mad as the hypocrites do;—not the beastliness of these days, that will make a fellow's inside like a shaking bog—and as rotten; but barleycorn, such as would put the souls of three butchers into one weaver. Ale that would flare like turpentine—génuine Boniface!—This immortal viand (for it was more than liquor) was vended at twopence per pint. The immeasurable villainy of our vintners would, with their march of intellect (if ever they could get such a brewing), drive a pint of it out into a gallon. Then the quantity the fellows would eat! Two or three of them would strike dismay into a round of beef. They could no more have pecked in that style than they could have flown, had the infernal black stream (that type of Acheron!) which soddens the carcass of a Londoner, been the fertilizer of their clay. There would this company, consisting most likely of some thousands, remain patiently and anxiously watching every turn of fate in the game, as if the event had been the meeting of two armies to decide their liberty. And whenever a Hambledon man made a good hit, worth four or five runs, you would hear the deep mouths of the whole multitude baying away in pure Hampshire—"Go hard!—go hard!—Tich and turn !—tich and turn !" To the honour of my countrymen, let me bear testimony upon this occasion also, as I have already done upon others. Although their provinciality in general, and personal partialities individually, were naturally interested in behalf of the Hambledon men, I cannot call to recollection an instance of their wilfully stopping a ball that had been hit out among them by one of our opponents. Like true Englishmen, they would give an enemy fair play. How strongly are all those scenes, of fifty years bygone, painted in my memory !—and the smell of that ale comes upon me as freshly as the new May flowers.

3

Upon coming to the old batters of the club, the name of John Small, the elder, shines among them in all the lustre of a star of the first magnitude. His merits have already been recorded in a separate publication, which every zealous brother of the pastime has probably read. I need, therefore, only subscribe my testimony to his uncommon talent, shortly summing up his chief excellencies. He was the best short runner of his day, and indeed I believe him to have been the first who turned the short hits to account. His decision was as prompt as his eye was accurate in calculating a short run. Add to the value of his accomplishment as a batter, he was an admirable fieldsman, always playing middle wicket ; and so correct was his judgment of the game, that old Nyren would appeal to him when a point of law was being debated. Small was a remarkably well-made and well-knit man, of honest expression, and as active as a hare.

He was a good fiddler, and taught himself the double bass. The Duke of Dorset, having been informed of his musical talent, sent him as a present a handsome violin, and paid the carriage. Small, like a true and simple-hearted Englishman, returned the compliment, by sending his Grace two bats and balls, also paying the carriage. We may be sure that on both hands the presents were choice of their kind. Upon one occasion he turned his Orphean accomplishment to good account. Having to cross two or three fields on his way to a musical party, a vicious bull made at him ; when our hero, with the characteristic coolness and presence of mind of a good cricketer, began playing upon his bass, to the admiration and perfect satisfaction of the mischievous beast.

4

I never saw a finer specimen of the thorough-bred old English yeoman than Richard Nyren. He was a good face-to-face, unflinching, uncompromising, independent man. He placed a full and just value upon the station he held in society, and he maintained it without insolence or assumption. He could differ with a superior without trenching upon his dignity, or losing his own. I have known him maintain an opinion with great firmness against the Duke of Dorset and Sir Horace Mann; and when, in consequence of his being proved to be in the right, the latter has afterwards crossed the ground and shaken him heartily by the hand. Nyren had immense advantage over Brett; for, independently of his general knowledge of the game, he was practically a better cricketer, being a safe batsman and an excellent hitter. Although a very stout man (standing about five feet nine) he was uncommonly active. He owed all the skill and judgment he possessed to an old uncle, Richard Newland, of Slindon, in Sussex, under whom he was brought up—a man so famous in his time, that when a song was written in honour of the Sussex cricketers, Richard Newland was especially and honourably signalised. No one man ever dared to play him. When Richard Nyren left Hambledon, the club broke up, and never resumed from that day. The head and right arm were gone.

210

The playing fields of England

There stands the School-house praepostor, safest of goal-keepers, and Tom Brown by his side, who has learned his trade by this time. Now is your time, Tom. The blood of all the Browns is up, and the two rush in together, and throw themselves on the ball, under the very feet of the advancing column; the praepostor on his hands and knees, arching his back, and Tom all along on his face. Over them topple the leaders of the rush, shooting over the back of the praepostor, but falling flat on Tom, and knocking all the wind out of his small carcass. " Our ball," says the praepostor, rising with his prize ; " but get up there, there's a little fellow under you." They are hauled and roll off him, and Tom is discovered, a motionless body.

Old Brooke picks him up. " Stand back, give him air," he says ; and then, feeling his limbs, adds, " No bones broken. How do you feel, young 'un ? "

" Hah-hah," gasps Tom, as his wind comes back, " pretty well, thank you—all right."

" Who is he ? " says Brooke.

" Oh, it's Brown, he's a new boy ; I know him," says East, coming up.

" Well, he is a plucky youngster, and will make a player," says Brooke.

211

Tom of Bedford

HAIL to thee, Tom of Bedford, or by whatever name it may please thee to be called, Spring or Winter. Hail to thee, six-foot Englishman of the brown eye, worthy to have carried a six-foot bow at Flodden, where

England's yeomen triumphed over Scotland's king, his clans and chivalry. Hail to thee, last of English bruisers, after all the many victories, unbought by yellow gold; need I recount them? Nay, nay! they are already well-known to fame—sufficient to say that Bristol's Bull and Ireland's Champion were vanquished by thee, and one mightier still, gold itself, thou didst overcome; for gold itself strove in vain to deaden the power of thy arm; and thus thou didst proceed till men left off challenging thee, the unvanquishable, the incorruptible. 'Tis a treat to see thee, Tom of Bedford, in thy "public" in Holborn way, whither thou hast retired with thy well-earned bays. 'Tis Friday night, and nine by Holborn clock. There sits the yeoman at the end of his long room, surrounded by his friends: glasses are filled, and a song is the cry, and a song is sung well suited to the place; it finds an echo in every heart—fists are clenched, arms are waved, and the portraits of the mighty men of yore, Broughton and Slack, and Ben, which adorn the walls, appear to smile grim approbation, whilst many a manly voice joins in the bold chorus:

"Here's a health to old honest John Bull,
When he's gone we shan't find such another,
And with hearts and with glasses brim full,
We will drink to old England, his mother."

212

The choleric colonel

I WISH Messrs. Cook & Sons would start a series of lectures on how to behave abroad, without attending which no man should be allowed to cross the Channel. An Englishman on the Continent has far more power to complicate International relationships than any Ambassador. Years ago I heard a choleric English Colonel yelling at a French porter because the baggage had gone wrong. I have often thought that probably that Frenchman and his children and their children may for all time dislike my country because of the anti-English complex which was put into a French porter by an atrociously irritable old gentleman.

OUR LAWFUL OCCASIONS

213

Step out

There is largeness and freedom here. Broad as the down and free as the wind, the thought can roam high over the narrow roofs in the vale. Nature has affixed no bounds to thought. All the palings, and walls, and crooked fences deep down yonder are artificial. The fetters and traditions, the routine, the dull roundabouts which deaden the spirit like the cold moist earth, are the merest nothings. Here it is easy with the physical eye to look over the highest roof. The moment the eye of the mind is filled with the beauty of things natural an equal freedom and width of view come to it. Step aside from the trodden footpath of personal experience, throwing away the petty cynicism born of petty hopes disappointed. Step out upon the broad down beside the green corn, and let its freshness become part of life.

The wind passes, and it bends—let the wind, too, pass over the spirit. From the cloud-shadow it emerges to the sunshine—let the heart come out from the shadow of roofs to the open glow of the sky. High above, the songs of the larks fall as rain—receive it with open hands. Pure is the colour of the green flags, the slender-pointed blades—let the thought be pure as the light that shines through that colour. Broad are the downs and open the aspect—gather the breadth and largeness of view. Never can that view be wide enough and large enough, there will always be room to aim higher. As the air of the hills enriches the blood, so let the presence of these beautiful things enrich the inner sense. One memory of the green corn, fresh beneath the sun and wind, will lift up the heart from the clods.

214

A marvellous thing

IT was a great delight to me, apart from the thought of all this, to look at the standing corn and see it like a great mere under the wind. Times it was still, without a ripple ; times it went in little waves, and you could almost think the big bosses of wild onion flowers under the far hedges were lilies heaving gently on the tide ; and times there was a great storm down in those hollows, like the storm in Galilee Mere, that the King of Love did still. So I watched the grain week by week, from the time when it was all one green till it began to take colour, turning raddled or abron or pale, each in his kind. And it shone, nights, as if there was a light behind it, with a kind of soft shining like glow-worms or a marish light. I never knew, nor do I know now, why corn shines thus in the nights of July and August, keeping a moonlight of its own even when there is no moon. But it is a marvellous thing to see, when the great hush of full summer and deep night is upon the land, till even the aspen tree, that will ever be gossiping, durstna speak, but holds breath as if she waited for the coming of the Lord.

215

The Tree

I THINK that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is pressed
Against the sweet earth's flowing breast ;

A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray ;

A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair ;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain ;
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

216

Beneath trees

A FIR-TREE is not a flower, and yet it is associated in my mind with primroses. There was a narrow lane leading into a wood, where I used to go almost every day in the early months of the year, and at one corner it was overlooked by three spruce firs. The rugged lane there began to ascend the hill, and I paused a moment to look back. Immediately the high fir-trees guided the eye upwards, and from their tops to the deep azure of the March sky over, but a step from the tree to the heavens. So it has ever been to me, by day or by night, summer or winter, beneath trees the heart feels nearer to that depth of life the far sky means. The rest of spirit found only in beauty, ideal and pure, comes there because the distance seems within touch of thought. To the heaven thought can reach lifted by the strong arms of the oak, carried up by the ascent of the flame-shaped fir. Round the spruce top the blue was deepened, concentrated by the fixed point ; the memory of that spot, as it were, of the sky is still fresh—I can see it distinctly—still beautiful and full of meaning. It is painted in bright colour in my mind, colour thrice laid, and indelible ; as one passes a shrine and bows the head to the Madonna, so I recall the picture and stoop in spirit to the aspiration it yet arouses. For there is no saint like the sky, sunlight shining from its face.

217

Easter

WHAT exultations in my mind
From the love-bite of this Easter wind !
My head thrown back, my face doth shine
Like yonder Sun's, but warmer mine.
A butterfly—from who knows where ?—
Comes with a stagger through the air,
And, lying down, doth ope and close
His wings, as babies work their toes :
Perhaps he thinks of pressing tight
Into his wings a little light !

And many a bird hops in between
The leaves he dreams of, long and green,
And sings for nipple-buds that show
Where the full-breasted leaves must grow.
Winter is dead, and now we sing
This welcome to the new-born Spring.

218

" *Only a dog* "

MY blessed dog, no one knows what you meant to me, and of you they have said, " It was only a dog ! " Is it foolish that my eyes grow dim when I think of you, and life seems all empty without you, and still more is it futile for me to believe that there is a place where you will go to where there is happiness for you and some reward for your gallantry, your faithfulness, and your unquestioning love ? I think I base my belief on a life hereafter for you, not on my feeling but on the look that came into your eyes when you knew I was in pain or in trouble. If I were God, there would be green fields in which you should run, and endless bones which you could retrieve, and though—forgive me—I could give you no cats to chase, I would give you such happy days, such peaceful sleep, and at least the power to dream that you were out hunting in the woods.

219

Song of All Creatures

Most high omnipotent, good Lord,
Thine are praise, glory and honour and all benediction,
To Thee alone, Most High, do they belong :
And no man is there, worthy Thee to Name.
Praise be to Thee, my Lord, with all Thy creatures,
Chiefest of all, Sir Brother Sun
Who is our day, through whom Thou givest light :
Beautiful is he ; radiant, with great splendour :
Of Thee, Most High, he is a true revealour.
Praise be to Thee, my Lord, for Sister Moon and for the stars ;
In heaven hast Thou formed them, bright, precious and fair.
Praise be to Thee, my Lord, for Brother Wind, and for the air and for the cloud, for clear sky and all weathers,

By which Thou givest nourishment to all Thy
creatures.
Praise to Thee, my Lord, for Sister Water ; she
Most useful is, and humble, precious and pure.
Praise be to Thee, my Lord, for Brother Fire ; by whom
Thou lightest up the night :
And fair is he and merry, mighty and strong.
Praise be to Thee, my Lord, for our Sister,
Mother Earth,
The which sustains and keeps us :
She brings forth diverse fruits, the many-hued
flowers and grass.
O Creatures all ! praise and bless my Lord,
and grateful be,
And serve Him with deep humility.

220

Vespers

O Blackbird, what a boy you are !
How you do go it !
Blowing your bugle to that one sweet star—
How you do blow it !
And does she hear you, blackbird boy, so far ?

Or is it wasted breath?
"Good Lord! she is so bright
To-night!"
The blackbird saith.

221

Forgive us

Little things that run and quail
And die in silence and despair!

Little things, that fight, and fail,
And fall on earth and sea and air!

All trapped and frightened little things,
The mouse, the coney, hear our prayer!

As we forgive those done to us,
—The lamb, the linnet and the hare,—

Forgive us all our trespasses,
Little creatures everywhere!

222

The Stag

"But, my dear fellow," he said, "the stag likes it." The stag likes it! Did you ever hear such a canting excuse for the continuance of hunting? Of course you have heard it often, for it is amazing how easily the human conscience is conveniently satisfied by a lie, if that lie be repeated often enough. The stag likes it—likes being chased out to sea, likes being brought back in a boat and having his throat cut. How pleasant that must be, and how the fox must appreciate being chased by pink-coated barbarians, how he must relish the joke of stopped earths when his heart is bursting with weariness ; how the hare must enjoy the thrills of coursing ! It is time we made an end of this hypocrisy, and at the same time an end of all blood sports. It is too much to hope that we may see a pack of foxes chasing a corpulent M.F.H. across country, but at least public opinion should be strong enough to stop a form of savagery which has no sanctions but selfishness and cruelty.

223

The comical ones

When God had finished the stars and whirl of coloured suns
He turned His mind from big things to fashion little ones ;

Beautiful tiny things (like daisies) He made, and then
He made the comical ones in case the minds of men
Should stiffen and become
Dull, humourless and glum,
And so forgetful of their Maker be
As to take even themselves—*quite seriously.*
Caterpillars and cats are lively and excellent puns :
All God's jokes are good—even the practical ones !
And as for the duck, I think God must have smiled a bit
Seeing those bright eyes blink on the day He fashioned it.
And He's probably laughing still at the sound that came out of its bill !

224

The Snare

I HEAR a sudden cry of pain.
There is a rabbit in a snare.
Now I hear the cry again,
But I cannot tell from where.

But I cannot tell from where
He is calling out for aid,
Crying on the frightened air,
Making everything afraid !

Making everything afraid !
Wrinkling up his little face
As he calls again for aid ;
And I cannot find the place !

And I cannot find the place
Where his paw is in the snare !
Little one ! Oh, little one !
I am searching everywhere !

225

Unto babes

THERE is death in the thoughts of men. The world is one wide riddle to them, darker and darker as it draws to a close. But the secret of it is known to the child, and the Lord of Heaven and Earth is most to be thanked in that He has hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes.

226

Which life God send

I am called Childhood, in play is all my mind,
To cast a coyte, a cokstele, and a ball.
A top can I set, and drive it in his kind,
But would to God these hateful bookes all
Were in a fire burnt to powder small.
Then might I lead my life always in play :
Which life God send me to mine ending day.

227

A little child

Certainly Adam in Paradise had not more sweet and curious apprehensions of the world than I when I was a child. The corn was orient and immortal wheat which never should be reaped nor was ever sown. I thought it had stood from everlasting to everlasting. The dust and stones of the street were as precious as gold : the gates were at first the end of the world. The green trees when I saw them first through one of the gates transported me ; their sweetness and unusual beauty made my heart to leap, and almost mad with ecstasy, they were such strange and wonderful things.

The Men ? O what venerable and reverend creatures did the aged seem ! Immortal Cherubims ! And young men glittering and sparkling angels, and maids strange seraphic pieces of life and beauty ! Boys and girls tumbling in the streets were moving jewels : I knew not that they were born or should die. All things abided eternally as they were in their proper places. Eternity was manifest in the Light of Day, and something infinite behind everything appeared, which talked with my expectation and moved my desire. The City seemed to stand in Eden or to be built in Heaven. The streets were mine, the temple was mine, the people were mine, their clothes and gold and silver were mine, as much as their sparkling eyes, fair skins and ruddy faces. The skies were mine, and so were the sun and moon and stars, and all the world was mine ; and I the only spectator and enjoyer of it.

So that with much ado I was corrupted, and made to learn the devices of the world, which now I unlearn, and become, as it were, a little child again that I may enter into the Kingdom of God.

228

Little Straggler

THOU straggler into loving arms,
Young climber up of knees,
When I forget thy thousand ways
Then life and all shall cease.

229

Infant Joy

I HAVE no name—
I am but two days old.
What shall I call thee?
I happy am,
Joy is my name.—
Sweet joy befall thee!

Pretty joy!
Sweet joy but two days old.
Sweet joy I call thee.
Thou dost smile,
I sing the while,
Sweet joy befall thee!

230

Says Jane

"BUNCHES of grapes," says Timothy ;
"Pomegranates pink," says Elaine ;
"A junket of cream and a cranberry tart
For me," says Jane.

"Love-in-a-mist," says Timothy ;
"Primroses pale," says Elaine ;
"A nosegay of pinks and mignonette
For me," says Jane.

"Chariots of gold," says Timothy ;
"Silvery wings," says Elaine ;
"A bumpity ride in a wagon of hay
For me," says Jane.

231

Unrepentant

OF all the things I dislike, there is nothing so abhorrent to me as a spoilt child. I have pinched several, and never had the slightest qualm of conscience afterwards ; and though I am a man of peace, I hope to pinch many more before I die.

232

Me

My dear Daddie bought a mansion
For to bring my Mammie to,
In a hat with a long feather,
And a trailing gown of blue;
And a company of fiddlers
And a rout of maids and men
Danced the clock round to the morning,
In a gay house-warming then.
And when all the guests were gone, and
All was still as still can be,
In from the ivy hopped a
Wee small bird: and that was Me.

233

On a lucky investment

If I should ever by chance grow rich
I'll buy Codham, Cockridden, and Childerditch,
Roses, Pyrgo, and Lapwater,
And let them all to my elder daughter.
The rent I shall ask of her will be only
Each year's first violets, white and lonely,

The first primroses and orchises—
She must find them before I do, that is.
But if she finds a blossom on furze,
Without rent they shall all for ever be hers.
Codham, Cockridden, and Childerditch,
Roses, Pyrgo, and Lapwater,—
I shall give them all to my elder daughter.

234

My Nanny

I SOMETIMES think that the old Nannies of English homes are amongst the most beautiful of God's creatures. Year in and year out they just serve a little child, who one day is likely to forget them. They move from mother to daughter, and nothing seems to matter save that they may help a young life. Of course they get a little cross in their old age, even maybe a little difficult ; but no great poet, so far as I know, has ever made a song to their glory. It is my habit to take my hat off to Sisters of Mercy. I wish we took our hats off to the old Nannies of English homes. There are few who so deserve our love.

235

The dead baby

HE didn't mean to be cruel. Always I repeat that to myself lest I turn fierce in my sorrow, only he didn't want a baby and my soul craved for one. He wanted just me, and I wanted a baby and him ; but if only he could understand he wouldn't whistle about the house quite so merrily and he wouldn't tell me to pull myself together and not give in to my sorrow.

236

The first term

NO mother has a worse task than that of seeing her girl or boy off to school for the first time. It is the very devil. I think that even the less imaginative father hardly dares think of the little son's thoughts as he creeps into his school bed on the first night away from home. This is a moment in life for which, as far as I know, no prayers have ever been written, but at which the mother and the father long for words in which they may express how deeply they yearn for the old child-like belief that there are angels who stand at the head and the foot of children's beds.

237

C. L. M.

IN the dark womb where I began
My mother's life made me a man.
Through all the months of human birth
Her beauty fed my common earth.
I cannot see, nor breathe, nor stir,
But through the death of some of her.

Down in the darkness of the grave
She cannot see the life she gave.
For all her love, she cannot tell
Whether I use it ill or well,
Nor knock at dusty doors to find
Her beauty dusty in the mind.

If the grave's gates could be undone,
She would not know her little son,
I am so grown. If we should meet
She would pass by me in the street,
Unless my soul's face let her see
My sense of what she did for me.

What have I done to keep in mind
My debt to her and womankind?
What woman's happier life repays
Her for those months of wretched days?
For all my mouthless body leeched
Ere Birth's releasing hell was reached?

What have I done, or tried, or said
In thanks to that dear woman dead?
Men triumph over women still,
Men trample women's rights at will,
And man's lust roves the world untamed.

. . . . .

O grave, keep shut lest I be shamed.

238

The Blessing

I HAD a letter to-day from an ecclesiastic. He told me of the death of his Mother—a lovely old lady who was known to me. The ecclesiastic bemoaned the fact that she died before he could arrive to give her his blessing. Poor man! What a condition of mind! Is it possible that he failed to realise how *he* needed *her* blessing?

239

Mother

Heaven help all mothers if they be not really dears, for their boy will certainly know it in that strange short hour of the day when every mother stands revealed before her little son. That dread hour ticks between six and seven ; when children go to bed later the revelation has ceased to come. He is lapt in for the night now and lies quietly there, madam, with great mysterious eyes fixed upon his mother. He is summing up your day. Nothing in the revelations that kept you together and yet apart in play-time can save you now ; it is the boy's hour, and you have come up for judgment.

" Have I done well to-day, my son ? " You have got to say it, and nothing may you hide from him ; he knows all. How like your voice has grown to his, but more tremulous, and both so solemn, so unlike the voice of either of you by day.

" You were a little unjust to me to-day about the apple ; were you not, mother ? "

Stand there, woman, by the foot of the bed, and cross your hands and answer him.

"Yes, my son, I was. I thought——"

But what you thought will not affect the verdict.

"Was it fair, mother, to say that I could stay out till six, and then pretend it was six before it was quite six?"

"No, it was very unfair. I thought——"

"Would it have been a lie if I had said it was quite six?"

"O my son, my son! I shall never tell you a lie again."

"No, mother, please don't."

"My boy, have I done well to-day on the whole?"

Suppose he were unable to say yes?

240

Father

I CAN never forget looking into the face of my Father when life had left the dear body, and thinking of the times unnumbered when I failed to tell him what I owed to him. They tell me that when I was young he and my Mother went without things to give me of the best. I know that the thoughts of his last years were centred around me. I wonder now if there is an angel who can take him a message that will tell him that as the years go by I am increasingly grateful to him. On the last Sunday of his life he expected me to have supper with him, and told my Mother several times that he was certain I should come. I was tired and did not go. That is a thing that haunts now it is too late.

241

Wise lovers

To love and to be loved the wise would give
All that for which alone the unwise live.

242

Therefore she loved him

And in a little time Caitilin Ni Murrachu went with her companion across the brow of the hill, and she did not go with him because she had understood his words, nor because he was naked and unashamed, but only because his need of her was very great, and, therefore, she loved him, and stayed his feet in the way, and was concerned lest he should stumble.

243

Of beauty

LET us use it while we may,
Snatch those joys that haste away !
Earth her winter coat may cast,
And renew her beauty past :
But, our winter come, in vain
We solicit spring again :
And when our furrows snow shall cover,
Love may return, but never lover.

244

Devotion

FAIN would I change that note
To which fond love hath charmed me,
Long, long to sing by rote,
Fancying that that harm'd me :
Yet when this thought doth come,
" Love is the perfect sum
Of all delight,"
I have no other choice
Either for pen or voice
To sing or write.

O Love! they wrong thee much
That say thy sweet is bitter,
When thy ripe fruit is such
As nothing can be sweeter.
Fair house of joy and bliss,
Where truest pleasure is,
I do adore thee:
I know thee what thou art,
I serve thee with my heart,
And fall before thee.

245

Her self

That which made her fairness much the fairer, was that it was but the fair ambassador of a fair mind.

246

A heart that's kind

Sweet Stay-at-Home, sweet Well-content,
Thou knowest of no strange continent:
Thou hast not felt thy bosom keep
A gentle motion with the deep;

Thou hast not sailed in Indian seas,
When scent comes forth in every breeze.
Thou hast not seen the rich grape grow
For miles, as far as eyes can go ;
Thou hast not seen a summer's night
When maids could sew by a worm's light ;
Nor the North Sea in spring send out
Bright hues like birds that flit about
In solid cages of white ice—
Sweet Stay-at-Home, sweet Love-one-place.
Thou hast not seen black fingers pick
White cotton when the bloom is thick,
Nor heard black throats in harmony ;
Nor hast thou sat on stones that lie
Flat on the earth, that once did rise
To hide proud kings from common eyes.
Thou hast not seen plains full of bloom
When green things had such little room
They pleased the eye like rarer flowers—
Sweet Stay-at-Home, all these long hours.
Sweet Well-content, sweet Love-one-place,
Sweet simple maid, bless thy dear face ;
For thou hast made more gentle stuff
Nurture thy gentle self enough ;
I love thee for a heart that's kind—
Not for the knowledge in thy mind.

247

At evening

WHEN I am weary, throng'd with the cares of the vain day
That tease as harsh winds tease the unresting autumn boughs,
I still my mind at evening, and put all else away
But the image of my Love, where all my thoughts I house.
The thoughts of her fall gently as the gentleness of snow
That after storm makes smoothness in the ways that are rough;
White with a hush of beauty over my heart they grow
To the peace of which my heart can never hold enough.

248

A woman

WHY is it that women suffer so much more than men? Is it that we men have not enough native courage to stand the strain? Which of us would have babies if we had to endure what women endure? If a man is sometimes damned by his women folk, he is more often saved by them. I doubt if there is salvation for us men save that God enables women to work miracles upon us. I wish we respected them more ; I wish we could be less liable through our clumsiness to tread the romance out of their hearts ; I wish, since we cannot bear their suffering with them, that we could see it, and kneel more evidently at the feet of the woman who is saving us.

One thing at least we can do. We can remember when we come back from our day of busyness in work-shop or office that her day's work minding our little home has been infinitely harder than our day. She never leaves her shop and never shuts the front-door on her cares. A man who grouses because the chop is underdone is not fit to have a wife.

249

Look out!

EXPECT the romance of a home to end when he fails to perform towards her those little acts of courtesy that he gladly offered her in the happy days of courtship, or she fails to acknowledge them with grace. It is good-bye to something essential, for instance, when he forgets or is too lazy to open the door for her, or she neglects to smile gratefully at him when he does.

250

Absence

O NEVER say that I was false of heart,
Though absence seem'd my flame to qualify.
As easy might I from myself depart
As from my soul, which in thy breast doth lie:
That is my home of love: if I have ranged,
Like him that travels I return again,
Just to the time, not with the time exchanged,
So that myself bring water for my stain.
Never believe, though in my nature reign'd
All frailties that besiege all kinds of blood,
That it could so preposterously be stain'd,
To leave for nothing all thy sum of good;
For nothing this wide universe I call,
Save thou, my rose; in it thou art my all.

251

Feet of clay

If God permits me to win her love, may He protect me from ever killing her romance or ever dragging her out of the fairy land in which she lives, and in which she is even now seeking for the fairy prince. I suppose if I loved her as a man should love, I would wish her to meet that prince and to love him, and the measure of my sorrow is that I love her so much that I would fain act the prince and deceive her, even while my whole soul tells me that I am not great enough either to take or to sustain the part.

252

Lust

The expense of spirit in a waste of shame
Is lust in action ; and till action, lust
Is perjured, murderous, bloody, full of blame,
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust ;
Enjoy'd no sooner but despised straight,
Past reason hunted, and no sooner had,
Past reason hated, as a swallow'd bait
On purpose laid to make the taker mad :

Mad in pursuit and in possession so ;
Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme ;
A bliss in proof, and proved, a very woe ;
Before, a joy proposed ; behind, a dream.
All this the world well knows ; yet none knows well
To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell.

253

A stubborn will

Some few discreet men there are, that can govern themselves, and curb in these inordinate affections, by religion, philosophy, and such divine precepts of meekness, patience, and the like ; but most part, for want of government, out of indiscretion, ignorance, they suffer themselves wholly to be led by sense, and are so far from repressing rebellious inclinations, that they give all encouragement unto them, leaving the reins, and using all provocations to further them. Bad by nature, worse by art, discipline, custom, education, and a perverse will of their own, they follow on, wheresoever their unbridled affections will transport them, and do more out of custom, self will, than out of reason. *Contumax voluntas* (as Melancthon calls it) *malum facit*: this stubborn will of ours perverts judgement, which sees and knows what should and ought to be done, and yet will not do it. *Mancipia gulae*, slaves to their several lusts and appetite, they precipitate and plunge themselves into a labyrinth of cares: blinded with lust, blinded with ambition, they seek that at God's hands, which they may give unto themselves, if they could but refrain from those cares and perturbations, wherewith they continually macerate their minds. But giving way to those violent passions of fear, grief, shame, revenge, hatred, malice, etc.: they are torn to pieces, as Actaeon was of his dogs, and crucifie their own souls.

254

The woman pays

THE self-denial ought not to be imposed on the wife only: the husband ought to set the example: and let me hope that Mr. Lock does not indulge in the use of wine and spirits, while Mrs. Lock and her children ride in a jack-ass gig ; for if he do he wastes, in this way, the means of keeping her a chariot and pair.

If there be to be any expense not absolutely necessary ; if there be to be anything bordering upon extravagance, surely it ought to be for the pleasure of that part of the family, who have the least number of objects to enjoyment ; and for a husband to indulge himself in the guzzling of expensive, unnecessary and really injurious drink, to the tune, perhaps, of 50 or 100 pounds a year, while he preaches economy to his wife . . . is not only unjust, but unmanly.

255

On growing old together

And though the first sweet sting of love be past,
The sweet that almost venom is ; though youth
With tender and extravagant delight,
The first and secret kiss by twilight hedge,
The insane farewells repeated o'er and o'er,
Pass off ; there shall succeed a faithful peace ;
Beautiful friendship tried by sun and wind,
Durable from the daily dust of life.

And though with sadder, still with kinder eyes,
We shall behold all frailties, we shall haste
To pardon, and with mellowing minds to bless.
Then though we must grow old, we shall grow old
Together, and he shall not greatly miss
My bloom faded, and waning light of eyes,
Too deeply gazed in ever to seem dim ;
Nor shall we murmur at, nor much regret
The years that gently bend us to the ground,
And gradually incline our face ; that we
Leisurely stooping, and with each slow step,
May curiously inspect our lasting home.
But we shall sit with luminous holy smiles,
Endeared by many griefs, by many a jest,
And custom sweet of living side by side ;
And full of memories not unkindly glance
Upon each other.

256

The best sight

To see a young couple loving each other is no wonder ; but to see an old couple loving each other is the best sight of all.

257

Your gentle care

If you came to Heaven
And I was not there,
You would patiently sit down
(Heeding not the angels' frown)
On the outer stair,
Where you still might watch the gate,
Saying, " I will wait."

And when still I came not
You would rise and go
(Turning never once your eyes
Back to vanishing Paradise),
Neither fast nor slow,
With the smile I know so well,
Steadfast, into Hell.

And with head uplifted,
Walking very straight,
You would come where I should sit
In the middling-sinners' pit
All disconsolate,
And would swiftly fold me there
In your gentle care:

Saying, " But how came I
Carelessly to make
(Were you very lonely, dear,
While you sat and waited here ?)
Such a strange mistake ?
Tell me that I am forgiven ;
This, of course, is Heaven."

258

On loss

Though thou art dead and with thee all is dead,
Though thou art dead and life has died with thee,
Not here a fainting heart, a drooping head,
Not here shall tears or lamentations be :
Though thou wert husband, lover, master, friend,
Though thou wert all my only first-born son,
My starry love, my world without an end,
All my world's wonders nobly packed in one :

Though none be left—not one of all my stars,
Though sworded death has stripped me to the bone,
My spirit passes high beyond the bars,
My heart goes homing there where thine has gone:
Though, with thy dying, glory's self is shed,
I do not mourn—for I with thee am dead.

TOWARDS EVENING

259

Dear night

DEAR night ! this world's defeat ;
The stop to busie fools ; care's check and curb.

260

My bed

MY bed, the rest of all my cares,
The ende of toilyng paine,
Which bryngest ease and sollace sweete,
While darknesse doeth remaine,
My bedde, yelde to me slumber swete,
And triflyng dreams repell :
Cause carkyng care from sobbyng breast
To part, where it doeth dwell.
All mockeries of this wretched worlde,
Put cleane from out my mynde :
Doe these, my bedde, and then by thee
Much comfort shall I finde.

261

Content

THOUGH leaves are many, the root is one ;
Through all the lying days of my youth
I swayed my leaves and flowers in the sun :
Now I may wither into the truth.

262

A hundred years old

AH !—there is nothing like youth—not that old age is valueless. Even in extreme old age one may get on very well, provided we will but accept of the bounties of God. I met the other day an old man, who asked me to drink. "I am not thirsty," said I, "and will not drink with you." "Yes, you will," said the old man, "for I am this day one hundred years old, and you will never again have an opportunity of drinking the health of a man on his hundredth birthday." So I broke my word, and drank. "Yours is a wonderful age," said I. "It is a long time to look back to the beginning of it," said the old man ; "yet, upon the whole, I am not sorry to have lived it all." "How have you passed your time ?" said I. "As well as I could," said the old man ; "always enjoying a good thing when it came honestly within my reach ; but not forgetting to praise God for putting it there." "I suppose you were fond of a glass of good ale when you were young ?" "Yes," said the old man, "I was ; and so, thank God, I am still," and he drank off a glass of ale.

263

New light

THE seas are quiet when the winds give o'er :
So calm are we when passions are no more ;
For then we know how vain it is to boast
Of fleeting things too certain to be lost.
Clouds of affection from our younger eyes
Conceal that emptiness which age descries.

The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,
Lets in new light through chinks that time has made :
Stronger by weakness wiser men become
As they draw near to their eternal home :
Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view
That stand upon the threshold of the new.

264

Life's evening

AH, yet, ere I descend to the grave,
May I a small house and large garden have,
And a few friends, and many books, both true,
Both wise, and both delightful too !

265

Old photographs

It may or may not be agreeable to have attained the age of 38, but judging from old photographs, the privilege of being 19 has also its drawbacks. I turned over page after page of the ancient book in which were enshrined portraits of the friends of my youth, singly, in David and Jonathan couples, and in groups in which I, as it seemed to my mature and possibly jaundiced perception, always contrived to look the most immeasurable young bounder of the lot. Our faces were fat, and yet I cannot remember ever having been considered fat in my life ; we indulged in low-necked shirts, in "jemima" ties with diagonal stripes ; we wore coats that seemed three sizes too small, and trousers that were three sizes too big ; we also wore small whiskers.

266

Two heroes

If this letter reaches you, Bill and I will have gone out together. We are very near it now, and I should like you to know how splendid he was at the end—everlastingly cheerful and ready to sacrifice himself for others, never a word of blame to me for leading him into this mess. He is not suffering, luckily—at least, only minor discomforts.

His eyes have a comfortable blue look of hope, and his mind is peaceful with the satisfaction of his faith in regarding himself as part of the great scheme of the Almighty. I can do no more to comfort you than to tell you that he died as he lived, a brave, true man—the best of comrades and staunchest of friends.

My whole heart goes out to you in pity.

(Captain Scott to Mrs. Wilson, whose husband was dying at his side.)

267

O harmless Death!

FRAIL Life! in which, through mists of human breath,
We grope for truth, and make our progress slow,
Because by passion blinded; till, by death
Our passions ending, we begin to know.

O reverend Death! whose looks can soon
advise
E'en scornful youth, while priests their doctrines
waste;
Yet mocks us too; for he does make us wise,
When by his coming our affairs are past.

O harmless Death! whom still the valiant
brave,
The wise expect, the sorrowful invite,
And all the good embrace, who know the grave
A short dark passage to eternal light.

268

Why fear Death?

MEN fear Death as Children fear to go in the dark; And as that natural fear in Children is increased with tales, so is the other. Certainly the contemplation of Death as the Wages of Sin, and passage to another World, is Holy and Religious; but the fear of it, as a tribute due unto Nature, is weak. Yet in Religious Meditations there is sometimes mixture of vanity and superstition. . . . The Stoics bestowed too much cost upon Death, and by their great preparations made it appear more fearful. . . . It is as natural to die as to be born.

269

Death's drum

But many of us, as time goes on, cease to believe the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Let me advise you what you ought to do if that happens to you. If you can possibly help it, do not talk about your views. Be patient : you may change your mind again, before you die. Keep, in a quiet way, to the usual observances of your religion : be content to be conventional, be content to be inconsistent. Almost all of us arrive at these views : and some remain there, and some do not. Your duty is to wait. Possibly, nothing will come of your waiting : possibly, something. It may be, for you, a matter of holding on with patience, and of recognising what great evidences, authorities, and examples are on the side of this doctrine. And, whatever may come, or not come, of your long waiting, always be sure of one fact, that Death is a servant, having a Master over him : as the inscription at Zermatt says, over a man killed by an avalanche, *It is I, be not afraid.* Death beats his drum, this way and that, in the crowd of our lives ; he is doing what he was told : and I hope that I shall think thus of him when he comes to me.

270

A gallant gentleman

HEREABOUTS died a very
gallant gentleman
Captain L. E. G. OATES
(Inniskilling Dragoons),
Who, on their return from the Pole
in March 1912, willingly
walked to his death
in a blizzard to try and save
his comrades beset by hardship.

271

The conclusion

EVEN such is Time, that takes in trust
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with earth and dust ;
Who in the dark and silent grave,

When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days ;
But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
My God shall raise me up, I trust.

(This verse was written by Sir Walter Raleigh on the eve of his execution.)

272

Death the leveller

THE glories of our blood and state
Are shadows, not substantial things ;
There is no armour against fate :
Death lays his icy hand on kings.
        Sceptre and crown
        Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant with laurels where they kill ;
But their strong nerves at last must yield,
They tame but one another still ;
        Early or late,
        They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath,
When they, pale captives ! creep to death.

The garlands wither on your brow ;
Then boast no more your mighty deeds ;
Upon death's purple altar, now,
See where the victor victim bleeds !
All heads must come
To the cold tomb ;
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet and blossom in the dust.

273

The Lawe of the Lorde

EXTRACT from an exhortation written by the Lady Jane Grey the night before she was executed, in the ende of the New Testament, in Greke ; which she sent to her sister, Lady Katerine :

I have here sent you, good sister Katerine, a boke, which although it be not outwardly trimmed with gold, yet inwardli it is more worth than precious stones. It is the boke (dear sister) of the lawe of the Lorde. It is his testament and last will, which he bequeathed unto us wretches, which shall lead you to the path of eternal joy. And if you with a good mynde read it, and with an ernest desire folowe it, it shal bring you an immortal and everlasting life. It will teache you to live, and learne you to die.

And trust not that the tenderness of your age shal lengthen your life ; for as soon (if God call) goeth the young as the olde ; Deny the world, defy the devil, and despise the fleshe, and delight your selfe only in the Lorde. Be penitent for your sinnes, and yet dispair not : be strong in faith, and yet presume not : and desire with S. Paul "*to be dissolved, and to be with Christe*," with whom, even in death there is life. Be like the good servaunt, and even at midnight be waking : lest, when death commeth and steal upon you, like a theife in the nighte, you be found sleeping ; And as touching my death, rejoyce as I do (good sister) that I shal be delivered of this corruption, and put on uncorruption. For I am assured, that I shal, for losing of a mortal life, winne an immortal life : the whiche I praye God graunt you : Farewell, good sister, and put your onlye trust in God, who onlye must help you. Amen.

Your loving sister,
JANE DUDLEY.

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